



THE INDEPENDENT

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HEALTH/5

Why fitness centres are bad for you



TV/20

Death of 'This Life', the true story

EDUCATION +

Universities turn commercial

TODAY'S NEWS

Animal testing U-turn

The use of animals to test cosmetic products is to end in Britain, after a dramatic change of heart by the Government. The initiative, which will be announced later today, comes two weeks after *The Independent* revealed Labour had reneged on its election promise to ban experiments on animals to test cosmetics. Page 3

Louise must still wait

The jailed au pair Louise Woodward must wait until next week before she knows whether moves to reduce her sentence will be granted. The trial judge Hiller Zobel made it known through court officials in Cambridge, Massachusetts, that his decision will not be released until Monday morning at the very earliest. The judge has to decide whether to order her acquittal, reduce the sentence to manslaughter, order a re-trial, or let the verdict stand. Page 3

Pilot saves plane

An Airbus pilot who safely landed 114 passengers and crew at Heathrow airport after part of his landing gear failed explained how it was all in a day's work. Captain Tim Barnaby said he had been confident he could bring down the Virgin Atlantic airliner in one piece. The company said the pilot made a textbook emergency landing. A total of nine passengers and crew were treated afterwards, all for minor injuries. Page 4

Snow keeps his job

The only person guaranteed a job with Channel 4 News when the programme's ITN contract ends in June 1999 is its presenter, Jon Snow. Focus group research shows he is the programme's biggest asset. Viewers believe Snow combines 'gravitas and authority' while carrying a 'whiff of the anti-establishment' about him. Page 9

Masterclass for gifted

Gifted primary schoolchildren could be taught in masterclasses as part of an expanded programme of specialist schools. Ten per cent of pupils for the schools specialising in technology, sport, music or arts, will be selected on aptitude. Page 18

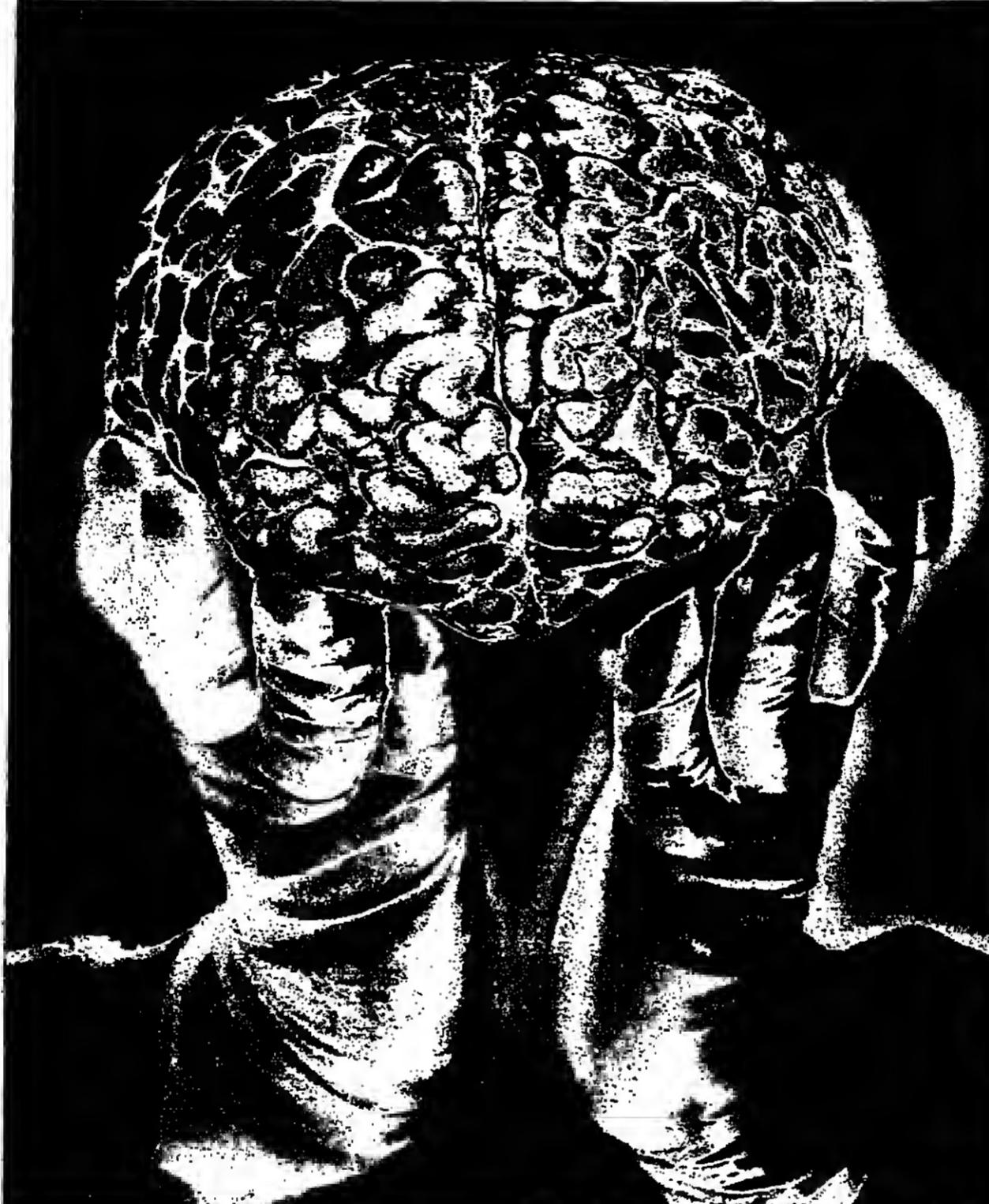
SEEN & HEARD

Are you now, or have you ever been, a friend of Bill Clinton? In an attempt to find all the President's women, a television advertisement is running in Washington calling on women who may have been sexually harassed by "the President" to make themselves known, giving a toll-free number to call. It has been placed by backers of Paula Jones - the woman who is suing President Clinton for sexual harassment, alleging that he exposed himself to her in an Arkansas hotel room when he was state governor. Ms Jones, who rejected an offer of compensation over the summer because it did not incorporate an admission of Mr Clinton's responsibility, now has new lawyers who are trying to prove "a pattern of behaviour" by Mr Clinton.

WEATHER The Eye, page 10
TELEVISION The Eye, page 12
CROSSWORDS Page 32 and the Eye, page 9
Web address: <http://www.independent.co.uk>



Proof positive. Taking Ecstasy permanently alters your brain



Ecstasy and agony: a real brain highlighted to show its contours. Scientists fear that regular drug-taking could lead to depression and suicide

The first formal studies using brain scans show that regular Ecstasy users are permanently changing their brains. Isn't that bad news? Well, maybe, maybe not: our brains might take it in their stride, just as they do so much else. Charles Arthur, Science Editor, looks at the implications.

Though small, the number is sufficient to pinpoint differences between groups using PET.

Dr Ricaurte examined the peoples' brains to evaluate the activity of the millions of brain synapses which release a neurotransmitter called serotonin - the "happiness chemical". The control subjects had normal levels of serotonin activity. The Ecstasy users, though, showed deficiencies in all brain regions.

Una McCann, one of the team members, told *New Scientist* magazine that this is clear evidence that Ecstasy damages serotonin-generating synapses. "The message is that if you're going to use it, do it in moderation."

But David Concar, the deputy editor of *New Scientist* and a PhD in biochemistry, pointed out last night that the case against Ecstasy may not be so clear-cut. "The really tricky point about this is whether you call these changes 'damage', or whether they are chemical responses to the drug which would in time reverse themselves." A scientist for the US Environmental Protection Agency commented that "there's no evidence of structural damage".

That is because Ecstasy affects the production of a chemical that modulates how happy we feel. In effect, repeated use might leave the brain drained of that chemical. But scientists are still debating whether, over time, our most adaptable organ might make allowances even for that change.

The latest research by George Ricaurte, assistant professor of neurology at Johns Hopkins University, used positron emission tomography (PET) scanners, which can produce detailed images of active areas of the brain, to study two groups, each of 14 recreation drug users.

The first group used Ecstasy and other drugs; the others used drugs excluding Ecstasy.

Blair's cool Britannia is left out in the euro cold

Tony Blair will lay on a show of the best of British design, culture and food at Canary Wharf in east London for the French President and Prime Minister, who arrive today. But he will also be trying to prevent Britain from becoming politically marginalised in Europe by the creation of a single currency. Anthony Bevins, Katherine Butler and John Lichfield report.

Style wars were declared by the Prime Minister's office last night, as frantic London preparations were under way for the annual summit between Jacques Chirac, the French President, Lionel Jospin, his Prime Minister, Tony Blair and ministerial colleagues.

While the diplomatic agenda ranged over the customary points of mutual European and international interest, including the single currency and Iraq, the lunchtime menu, the furniture, the art to be hung on the walls, even the rugs and flower arrangements, were being given the full promotional spin by the Number 10 spokesman.

With a bird's-eye view of the Millennium Dome development site, an entire floor of the 50-storey Canary Wharf tower has been taken over for the summit, with Terence Conran laying out rooms which will be partitioned with opaque glass walls, complete with cherrywood doors.

Whitehall went to town on the furnishings and the young team of top British designers who are being provided with a world stage for their work - much of it already promoted by the Italians, who have spotted winning designs and provided

some of the designers with work. The furniture designers include Jasper Morrison and Matthew Hilton, who have both worked for Italian manufacturers, Fred Scott, Tom Dixon, Terence Woodgate, Coubahyodin, Tristram Mylles, Lynne Wilson and Michael Young.

Rugs are to be provided by Christopher Farr, light sculpture by Jeremy Lord, flower arrangements from Paula Pryke - and the food from Anton Escalera, of the Midsummer House Restaurant, Cambridge.

But for all the assertive British cultural diplomacy, there is also a serious topic on the table: the creation of a single currency and the new council which will manage it from 1999. The Government will not participate unless and until it merges the pound into the euro, and hence will be excluded from decision-making on some of the key issues in Europe.

Britain's marginalisation took concrete shape last night as France and Germany unveiled details of their plans for a new "council" to co-ordinate economic policy making. They made public a letter detailing a bilateral agreement on the Euro council.

The new economic "government" will be known as the "Euro-X", the X representing the number of countries in the euro zone. Finance ministers from the zone will meet before the regular monthly meetings of EU finance ministers to co-ordinate a wide range of areas, from budgetary policies to taxation.

The letter directly challenges Gordon Brown's assertion that Britain will set the agenda in Europe on employment policy, for instance. Among the areas the council will cover are "structural policies... in particular employment and labour market policies on the adaptability of markets and on tax reform" as well as "evaluation of wage and cost trends". Britain will be excluded from meetings on these subjects.

The Chancellor made it clear yesterday that he is deeply unhappy with any bid to undermine the central role of ECOFIN, the official EU council of finance ministers. "ECOFIN remains the body that takes formal decisions," he said. Yet, according to French sources, Britain has been desperately jockeying to be granted at least observer status on the new council, a request neither Bonn nor Paris have so far been willing to countenance.

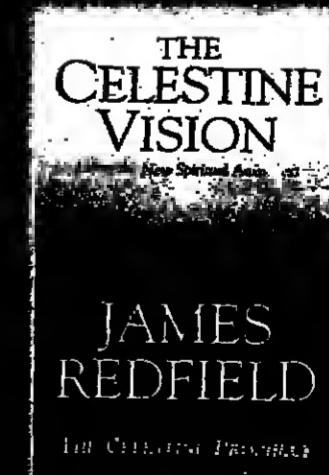
In Brussels for a meeting with fellow finance ministers, the Chancellor told reporters that Britain would not be sidelined. He said the Government's Commons statement committing Britain "in principle" to monetary union represented a "turning point" which would be enough to demonstrate the Government's pro-Euro credentials to its partners.

Mr Jospin and President Chirac will be seeking to defuse British hostility to the planned Euro-Council. France understands that the council is viewed with suspicion in London. But Mr Jospin will argue that the council will be in Britain's interest if sterling is merged into the euro in due course. It would provide a forum for some political and democratic management of the euro zone, balancing the purely technocratic and monetarist deliberations of the independent European Central Bank.

French officials are convinced that the Blair government has a schizophrenic view of the euro council. While Britain remains outside the single currency, it will inevitably be suspicious of anything that resembles the politburo of a hard-core Europe, from which it is excluded.

On the other hand, if Britain joined the single currency early next century, French officials believe the Blair government would incline towards its own view that the euro council is an essential political counterweight to the purely monetary management of the European central bank.

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2/BRIEFING

COLUMN ONE

Remembrance poppy row enmeshes McAleese

The Irish president-elect Mary McAleese yesterday said she would not be wearing a memorial poppy at her inauguration on Armistice Day next week.

Her announcement saw the simple flower, supposed to represent the poppies in Flanders fields from the First World War, firmly entangled in the thorn of Northern Ireland politics.

Mrs McAleese, who was elected as Ireland's head of state last week to succeed Mary Robinson will be attending a Remembrance Day service on Sunday in Dublin. But she said she had decided "after long deliberation, apart from the shamrock, the president should not wear emblems or symbols of any kind". That included the poppy.

Her decision outraged many Tory MPs, and Ulster Unionists. Andrew Mackay, the Tory spokesman on Northern Ireland, said: "It's obscene for Mary McAleese to confuse the poppy with any sectarian issues. It's a mark of respect for the millions of people who gave their lives in both world wars, including many thousands of Irish men and women."

David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist leader, said: "If she had wanted to make a significant contribution, that was her opportunity. It is a missed opportunity."

Mrs McAleese, 46, who was born in Belfast, and has been deeply committed to the peace campaign in the North, was responding to requests to wear the poppy from the Royal British Legion and other groups.

She was advised against it by Irish ministers, including the Irish Defence Minister, Michael Smith, who said it was private matter for Mrs McAleese but he believed that she could be creating problems for the future if she wore an emblem.

By announcing her decision, however, she stepped into a row over the wearing of the poppy north of the Border, where 20 workers at the Coats Viyella textile factory in Londonderry have been suspended for wearing the poppy against a company ruling.

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, had been trying to calm tempers about the poppy and Mrs McAleese's dilemma. She said that she hoped the poppy was not going to become a "political football".

The row over the flower has reopened old wounds in Northern Ireland. Remembrance Day may be seen by some as a militaristic, support for the British Army, regarded by some nationalists as an occupying army. Others remember that many from the Irish Free State volunteered for the British Army, in spite of Ireland's neutrality, in the Second World War.

More recent events cast an even darker shadow – notably the 1987 IRA bomb at Enniskillen in which 11 people lost their lives.

Lembit Opik, the Liberal Democrat spokesman on Ulster, said: "The concern about poppies is a symptom, not a cause of the differences in Northern Ireland. When such events cease to be an issue, we will know we have made progress."

— Colin Brown, Chief Political Correspondent

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PEOPLE



The artist formerly known as Nigel ...

After five years in exile, Britain's best known violinist has relaunched, *nay reinvented, himself.*

Nigel Kennedy, still widely described as a "punk musician" at the age of 40, has let it be known that henceforth he wishes to be known as "Kennedy".

The artist formerly known as "Nige" or even "NKG", has vowed to ditch his first name from all future recordings, concerts and public appearances.

Happily this coincides with the launch of his new re-recording of Elgar's Violin Concerto released this week. "I have never liked the name Nigel," he explains. "But what people want to address me as in conversation is up to them."

His publicist elaborated: "He has hated being called Nigel for as long as I have known him and a month ago he rang me to say he would prefer to be called Kennedy from now on."

"Naturally it is his decision, after all it is his name, though he's a bit baffled by the interest."

Others believe the name-change has more to do with a conscious mid-life decision to shake off his old scruffy, new-age soccer-mad punky image.

He had made it plain he would now prefer people to concentrate on his musical talent rather than

his former harrow boy incarnation, typified by esurient English and extravagant gestures like spraying his Jaguar car claret and blue in tribute to his sporting heroes, Aston Villa.

Last month, Kennedy gave his first live performance since his "retirement" in 1992.

The critics largely agreed that he remains an outstanding violinist, technically brilliant and with a gift for making audiences listen hard.

He has not yet fully eschewed the "Nige" persona, however. He performed at the Royal Festival Hall sporting a new age haircut and a spotty waistcoat. It is partly through this "alternative" approach that Kennedy has been credited by many critics as the performer who introduced a new generation of young people to classical music. His recording of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* has sold over 2 million copies.

His next live performance of Elgar's Violin Concerto, accompanied by the Oxford University Chamber Orchestra, will take place at the Virgin Megastore in Oxford Street, central London, on 17 November.

— Amanda Kelly

New neighbours stumped by Boycott's arrival



Sir Geoffrey Boycott, whose gruff tones have come to symbolise Yorkshire as much as the white rose itself, is abandoning the county of his birth to go and live by the seaside in Dorset.

The former England batsman and now television commentator enjoys near-legendary status in the Ridings, where cricketing achievement is widely seen as the mark of a man's worth.

But among the retired gentlefolk of Poole, his reputation counts for less. Two of his prospective neighbours asked "Who is he?" when told yesterday of the Yorkshireman's pend-

ing arrival at his new harbourside abode. "To be perfectly honest, I don't expect people would know he was here," said another near neighbour. "You only occasionally see your neighbour, although to be truthful I don't expect I would recognise him if I saw him."

Sir Geoffrey, 57, grew up in the coal mining village of Fitzwilliam. During one of his many run-ins with the Yorkshire county cricket committee he once boasted: "I have lived in the Wakefield district all my life and I have no wish to live anywhere else."

— Ian Burrell

Druid reunited with Excalibur

A Druid who thinks he is the reincarnation of King Arthur was yesterday reunited with his ceremonial sword Excalibur.

Arthur Pendragon's sword was confiscated seven months ago by police in Trafalgar Square. But, it was returned to him yesterday after a judge at Southwark Crown Court said he was satisfied Mr Pendragon, 43, was a genuine

Druid and that the sword was used for ceremonial and ritual purposes. Judge Stephen Robbins made his ruling after reading reports from Professor Ronald Hutton, a leading authority on Druids. He said: "Professor Hutton leaves ... no doubt that this defendant's Druid credentials are genuine. It is not in the public interest to pursue this case."

UPDATE

WELFARE

Care of elderly seen as state duty

The Government should retain a major role in financing care of the elderly, according to a new national survey.

Most people are realistic about the likelihood of needing care in old age, whether in their own home or in a residential or nursing home, the Economic and Social Research Council found. But there is a limit to their willingness to take responsibility for their own care – particularly financial responsibility.

Most of the people the ESRC questioned believed that the state should pay at least the basic care costs and few were willing to use capital tied up in their home to pay for care. Private long-term care insurance schemes were considered unattractive, with only 6 per cent of the people questioned saying they would take them up. Two-thirds of those questioned said they were dissatisfied with the present means-tested system of state support, said the study, which involved almost 1,000 men and women.

A system based on partnership – in which the Government allows an individual to keep assets provided private insurers cover part of the costs of care – was a more popular option. But even here, only half were enthusiastic about this way of paying for their care.

— Glenda Cooper, Social Affairs Correspondent

LEISURE

Hotels' wet and wild side



Couples snorkelling in the bath and hosing each other down with sodawater are just some of the weird and wacky pleasures of hotel guests, are revealed today in its 1998 Hotel Guide.

Other aquatic anecdotes reported in the guide include a Chinese guest who asked for a goldfish to sit in the bath with him to aid relaxation; a party of Japanese visitors who booked three rooms in Carmarthen, south Wales, but all used the same bath because they liked the view of the river Wye; a guest in Llangollen in Wales who flooded two floors and a banqueting area after leaving the bath running and going for a long walk; and a woman at a hotel in Ashburton, Devon, who complained that while she was bathing a dog had entered her room and run off with her knickers.

The sodawater incident involved a guest who ordered several siphons from room service and later apologised for soaking the bed and surrounding area. He explained he and his girlfriend enjoyed squirting the water at each other. The snorkelling incident came to light when staff investigating a flood discovered two guests in a bathroom wearing face masks and breathing tubes.

ESSAY COMPETITION FOR LAW STUDENTS

The Independent is sponsoring an essay competition for law students to win a free place at the College of Law. Entrants have to write an essay under the question "What are Law Schools For?". The winner will have all tuition fees for the course paid.

Last year's winner of the College of Law/Independent competition, Abdul Hoq Mohammed, gained a training contract at Lincoln's Inn based Towers and Hamills.

Entries, in not more than 1,500 words, should be sent to: College of Law Essay Competition, College of Law, Braboeuf Manor, St Catherine's, Guildford, Surrey, GU3 1HA. For more information contact the college marketing department on 01483 460350.

TOURIST RATES

Australia (dollars)	2.31	Italy (lira)	2774
Austria (schillings)	19.79	Japan (yen)	203.56
Belgium (francs)	58.15	Malta (lira)	0.62
Canada (\$)	2.29	Netherlands (guilders)	3.17
Cyprus (pounds)	0.83	Norway (kroner)	11.56
Denmark (kroner)	10.79	Portugal (escudos)	286.07
France (francs)	9.43	Spain (pesetas)	237.42
Germany (marks)	2.83	Sweden (kroner)	12.37
Greece (drachme)	446.74	Switzerland (francs)	2.31
Hong Kong (\$)	12.59	Turkey (lira)	295.346
Ireland (pounds)	1.08	USA (\$)	1.64

Source: Thomas Cook
Rates for indicative purposes only

7.30 FOR 8



by Chris Priestley

ZITS



by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

Jet crash-lands as landing gear fails

The pilot of a Virgin Atlantic Airbus averted disaster yesterday when he made a "textbook emergency landing" at Heathrow. As Kate Watson-Smyth hears, his actions prevented a tragedy.

Part of the landing gear failed to extend properly, but the pilot brought the aircraft down safely, with 114 passengers and crew on board. Up to six people suffered minor injuries – including two crew members – as they slid down emergency chutes in a standard evacuation procedure.

Witnesses described how the four-engined European-made jet slewed down the Heathrow runway, sending off sparks at the end of its flight from Los Angeles.

In a statement, Virgin Atlantic said the Airbus made a successful emergency landing at 4.20pm using three, instead of four, sets of landing gear. The airline added: "The flight had proceeded normally until the crew routinely extended the

landing gear on approach to Heathrow. The crew received indications that the left main landing gear did not fully extend and so conducted a fly-past to enable a visual inspection of the gear to be undertaken from the ground, which confirmed that the left-hand gear was not fully extended.

"Indications in the cockpit confirmed that all three remaining landing gears had extended normally. The aircraft completed a normal approach and the crew accomplished a textbook emergency landing and came to rest on the runway."

Witness Rob Seabrook said there appeared to be problems with the undercarriage of the airplane as it came down to land, with one wheel-bay not having opened.

Another witness, John Asher, said: "He held it off the ground as long as he could, I guess to reduce speed to the minimum, and as it did eventually touch down it was obviously quite one-sided."

"As it went down the runway sparks were flying and it slewed off the end of the runway, virtually out of sight and there was a lot of smoke around," he said. "All the passengers were saying the pilot did a wonderful job and so did the crew. Everybody was praising them."

As the aircraft circled the airport, onlookers realised something was wrong.

Estate agent Giles Newby told BBC's Six O'Clock News: "It was in a position in the sky which it shouldn't have been, well below the cloud base. It was banking very severely. We were concerned that if it was going to come down, it was going to come down in a populated area."

Four passengers were taken to Ashford Hospital and treated for minor injuries, the London Ambulance Service said.

One of the runways at Heathrow was closed and passengers on other flights were delayed.

Virgin Atlantic said: "There will be internal investigation as well as the Air Accident Investigation Board inquiry. At the moment, it is too early to say what caused the incident."

The airport chaplain, Reverend Brian Lacock, who was comforting passengers, said: "Everybody was very relieved. They were singing the praises of the captain for bringing her in."

"All the passengers were saying the pilot did a wonderful job and so did the crew. Everybody was praising them."



Travelling light: The Lord Mayor of London and the Lady Mayoress preparing to exit their official carriage outside St Paul's Cathedral during early morning rehearsals for the Lord Mayor's Show this Saturday
Photograph: David Rose



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Doctors fearful of scientific fraud

Deal near in lorry strike

A national body to oversee scientific research and investigate allegations of fraud is urgently needed in the UK, leading medical editors said yesterday.

Patients had been harmed and the credibility of scientific institutions damaged by cases in which results had been falsified, signatures forged and research plagiarised.

Speaking after a conference on research misconduct held in London, organised by the Committee on Publication Ethics, Dr Richard Smith, editor of the British Medical Journal, cited a dozen new examples in which misconduct had been proved or was under investigation. They included cases in which signatures of patients giving consent for research to be done on them had been forged, consent from hospital ethics committees to do research had been forged and signatures of co-authors

had also been forged, to give the findings more weight.

One editor had told the conference how he had rejected a paper claiming to describe a cure for pre-eclampsia, the life-threatening condition associated with high blood pressure in pregnant women, which he suspected was fraudulent. A straw poll among the 130 present at the conference showed more than half of editors had similar experiences.

Pressure to publish is intense because it is the only way scientists can gain promotion, grants and laboratory space. Dr Smith cited the case of Malcolm Pearce, the obstetrician struck off the medical register in 1995 for falsely claiming to have successfully removed an ectopic pregnancy and re-implanted the fetus in the patient's womb who later gave birth to a healthy baby.

— Jeremy Laurance

— John Lichfield, Paris

Hopes were rising last night for an early settlement of the French truckers' dispute. The main federation of haulage employers, which walked out of negotiations last week, made substantial concessions in new talks at the transport ministry in Paris yesterday.

Sources within the negotiations said a settlement was possible by early today. The terms would have to be put to local union branches but the prospect of a lengthy strike now appeared to be receding.

Marc Blondel, secretary general of the Force Ouvrière union federation, said: "I think we are on the road to a solution." Meanwhile, thousands of trucks all over France remained on the road to nowhere. The number of barricades continued to increase yesterday, approaching 200 by early evening. For the first time, truckers disrupted traffic in Paris.

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Why

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Call for cheap home insurance

5/THE WAY WE LIVE

Why fitness centres can be bad for you

Fitness centres can be bad for your health, says a new report.
Glen Cooper, Social Affairs Correspondent, investigates Consumers' Association claims that your pockets are not the only thing damaged by expensive fitness centres.

Leisure is big business these days as we all go for "the burn". A study by the Henley Centres think-tank predicted last year that the £1bn sports services, health, fitness and leisure club sector will grow by 60 per cent over the next five years.

But the Consumers' Association claims today that some fitness centres are not coming up to scratch for the amount of

money that we pay them. Its magazine *Which?* sent two undercover fitness inspectors to four private clubs, four public leisure centres and two large hotels with fitness facilities for residents and local members.

The inspectors asked how much classes and membership was, noted how helpful staff were, examined the changing rooms and checked out the range and quality of equipment. Then they took part in one fitness class and a gym induction in each centre.

In their opinion the private clubs came out better than the public ones and said that improvements could be made at all the places they visited.

Aerobic instruction was "poor" they claimed, with seven out of ten fitness classes taught in a "mechanical and impersonal manner, with little or no contact between the in-

structor and individual participants". *Which?* said that some instructors did not bother to find out whether there were newcomers to the class or correct the people who were doing exercises wrongly.

An aerobics class at the Sports Connexion Leisure Club in Coventry was said to be "potentially unsafe" because the instructor paid little regard to the participants' needs. Mike Taylor, director of Sports Connexion, was very disappointed with what the *Which?* inspectors had said.

"In my view this instructor is as safe as you can get. He is RSA qualified and teaches around the area. I really don't understand it," he said.

Instructors at Meadowside Leisure Centre at Burton-on-Trent, and the Spicewall Park Sports Centre in Banbury were also said to be poor.

Mark Thomewill, Meadow-

side's leisure contracts manager, said: "We looked at the report and accepted we could improve in certain areas. We have introduced an induction scheme for beginners and an independent appraisal system for our instructors which is to be ongoing."

Mark Brenner, operations director of DC Leisure which runs Spicewall Park, said that while they welcomed any audit they had found the report "too negative".

Helen Parker, editor of *Which?*, said: "The poor quality of aerobics class teaching we found is particularly worrying. We want to see the keep-fit industry doing more to ensure that instructors have standard, thorough and recognisable qualifications." However, the magazine said that its findings should not put people off exercising, but it urged people to choose their centre carefully.



Going for the burn:
But some fitness centres are not giving their customers value for money, according to a new report by *Which?* magazine.
Photograph:
David Rose

Now the easy way in for tipplers in a hurry

Beaujolais nouveau tipplers in France are to test a new, self-opening cork. John Lichfield, in Paris, samples the infinitely reusable and horribly named Kwik-Kork, which arrives in Britain next November.

Have you ever been on a picnic and left the corkscrew at home? Have you ever sprained your wrist trying to open a wine bottle with a miniature corkscrew on a pen-knife? Help is on the way.

The wine house which first popularised Beaujolais nouveau will send ripples through the world of French wine production when the 1997 version arrives two weeks today. Emile Chandesaïs, a major Beaujolais producer, will become the first European wine house to use Kwik-Kork, a self-opening but otherwise traditional cork (it is made out of cork) invented in Canada eight years ago.

A plastic piston passes through the cork; a plastic ring on top operates the piston and opens the bottle; it can be closed again with the same device. The Michel Picard group, which owns Emile Chandesaïs, intends to market 600,000 bottles this year. The marketing director, Jean-Pierre Durand,

said: "We want to test the reaction in France and make sure we have everything just right before we sell abroad. We plan to send the Kwik-Kork bottles to Britain next November."

Wine-bottles with built-in corkscrews have already been marketed in Australia and South Africa. Mr Durand says French producers have been reluctant to take up the invention until now, partly through traditionalism, partly through a fear that any self-opening wine would be associated in the public's mind with the kind of flip-top, low-rent table wine which has been available for years.

"A traditional cork ... is necessary to allow a wine to continue to mature in the bottle," Mr Durand said. "We are satisfied ... that bottles with Kwik-Korks behave just like ordinary bottles." Michel Picard hopes to use self-opening corks with other middle-ranking wines such as Côte du Rhône but Mr Durand does not imagine we will ever see a Kwik-Kork ring atop a bottle of Château Mouton-Rothschild. "... The best wines sell so much on tradition that, from a marketing point of view, it would not make sense." Mr Durand sees the benefit of the smart corks mostly in the market for good, medium-priced wines: in other words, just the kind of wine you might take on a picnic while forgetting the corkscrew.

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7/SMOKING U-TURN

How Blair's ear was bent by the king of Formula One

Formula One racing was exempted from a tobacco sponsorship ban after lobbying by a former Labour aide, it emerged last night. Fran Abrams and Katherine Butler reveal Tony Blair met motor racing officials after representations from David Ward, an adviser to the labour leader John Smith until his death in 1994, who now works for the sport's governing body.

The Prime Minister had "numerous" meetings with leading Formula One officials, Mr Ward said last night. They attended a Downing Street reception as well as meeting Tessa Jowell, the Secretary of State for Health, and Tony Banks, the sports minister.

Some other sports which received less favourable treatment said that although they corresponded with ministers about the ban, they only met officials.

Mr Ward left the Labour Party to work as a consultant in Brussels after Mr Smith's death and now works exclusively for the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile, which among other things acts as a governing body for motor sport. He said he did not believe he received special treatment, though he added that the Government's decision came in response to a proposal from FIA, of which he is European director general.



Bernie Ecclestone and two stars of F1 - Michael Schumacher, left, and Eddie Irvine - at the German driver's 100th grand prix. Photograph: Allsport

One. It is not the only sport which is global."

The Government's decision to press for Formula One to be left out of a Europe-wide sponsorship and advertising ban also angered EU commissioners, who said the whole exercise might be killed off by it. Padraig Flynn, the EU's commissioner in charge of health policy, telephoned Mrs Jowell on Tuesday night to protest. "Why not snooker, why not basketball? This is nonsensical," said Barbara Nolan, commission health policy spokeswoman.

But Downing Street spokesman last night said Mr Blair had met Mr Mosley and Mr Ecclestone on 16 October. Motor racing provided 50,000 high-skilled and 150,000 part-time jobs and had an export value of £900m, he added.

"If we didn't table amendments to the directive we would be in a position where Formula One, being a global sport, would clearly go to Eastern Europe or the Far East and would be beamed back into Britain with more advertising," he said.

"Of course it is helpful that I know a lot of the individuals, but ... the Government said when they announced this that they wanted to consult with all the relevant parties. We have simply taken up the offer. I am sure a lot of other sporting bodies have done that. I don't think there has been any special favour to me," he said.

The president of the FIA,

Max Mosley, has met Mr Blair and so has Bernie Ecclestone, founder of the Formula One Constructors' Association.

A proposal made to ministers last month by the FIA argued that a European ban on tobacco sponsorship would simply drive Formula One events to the Far East - an argument which has been accepted by

ministers. It also adds that the body would be happy to help cut tobacco sponsorship of Formula One through a voluntary scheme.

Mr Ward pointed out that neither he nor his organisation received any money from tobacco sponsorship, although Formula One events are backed by it.

Last night representatives of other sports expressed anger at the contrast between their treatment and that of Formula One. Robert Holmes, spokesman for the British Darts Organisation, said he believed the motor sport had received preferential treatment.

"At the last meeting I attended about this the FIA were not represented. The other affected sports were looking to make a united stance on this but we were told they were having their own meeting," he said.

John Redwood, the Conservatives' Trade and Industry spokesman, said: "The Labour government has to explain to other sports why they weren't treated similarly to Formula

Other sports call for exemption too

There was little attempt by other sporting bodies to disguise their contempt for what they saw as the preferential treatment given to Formula One racing by Tony Blair and his ministers. The general reaction was: If they can have exemption from a sponsorship ban, why can't we?

Sporting organisations dependent on tobacco sponsorship said they have for years offered successful voluntary agreements on the promotion of smoking, and will now be pressing ministers to retain the status quo.

Robert Holmes, spokesman for the British Darts Organisation, whose sport depends on a £1.5m deal over four years for the Embassy World Professional Darts Championship and the Embassy Gold Cup, accused Downing Street of "snobbery" in giving concessions to the Formula One racing lobby. "It's particularly disappointing that a Labour government of all governments should strangle the life out of working-class sports," he said.

Mr Holmes denied suggestions from Downing Street that other sports - including darts - had indicated they could find alternative sponsorship.

— Michael Streeter, Legal Affairs Editor

Health lobby more sorry than angry

The anti-smoking lobby greeted news of the change in government policy more with sorrow than outright anger yesterday.

They recognised that ministers had faced a difficult choice, and concentrated much of their fire on the tactics of the motor racing industry. Their comments were also clearly intended to shore up ministers against demands from other lobby groups from within sport and the tobacco industry.

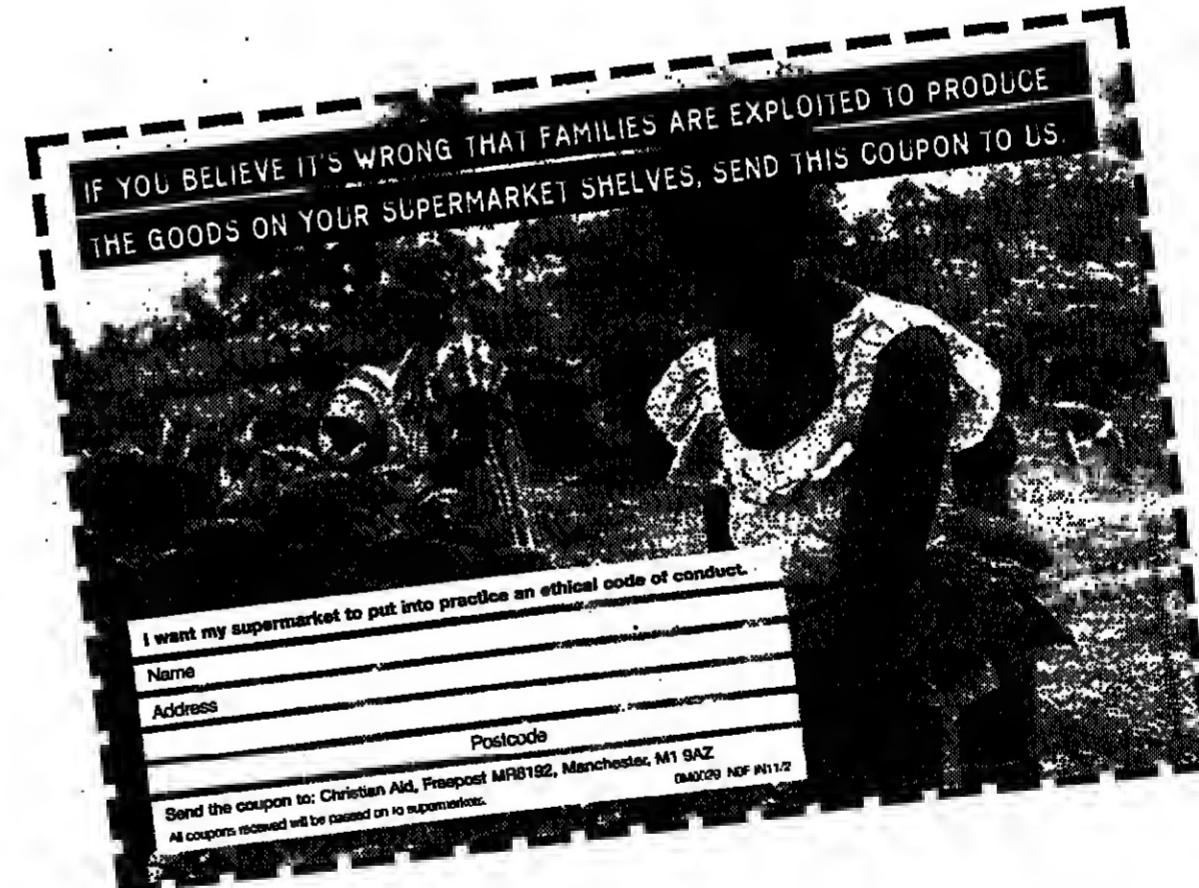
Dr Sandy Macara, chairman of the British Medical Association, said there had been "blackmail" from the Formula One lobby. "Clearly an unholy alliance of the tobacco manufacturers and the Formula One organisers has put the Government in an impossible position."

The director of the anti-smoking campaign group Ash, Clive Bates, said he believed the tobacco industry and F1 had "heavily threatened the Government by threatening to take events away from Europe".

The disappointment was echoed by Stephen Thornton, chief executive designate of the NHS Confederation. Health authorities, he said, were looking for a lead from the Government to help reduce smoking-related diseases.

— Michael Streeter

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Imax, the biggest
big-screen cinema
formats, are about to
arrive in Britain's
museums and
municipalities.

So what's next?
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9/MEDIA NEWS

It's big, expensive and coming soon to a cinema near you

Imax, the biggest of big-screen cinema formats, is about to arrive in Britain's museums and municipalities.

Paul McCann asks why so many are planned and whether they are simply a lottery-funded gimmick or the cutting edge of entertainment.

After years as a rather hokey novelty for parents to take their children to on wet Yorkshire afternoons, Britain has gone mad for the Imax cinema screen. Until now there has been only one of the huge-format screens in the country, but there are plans to open 10 in the next three years.

This week, builders moved on to a site in the middle of a roundabout at Waterloo, in south London, where they will construct Europe's largest cinema screen, a seven-storey Imax for the British Film Institute. And next month, the Trocadero centre, in central London, will open its new Imax – the first since the Museum of Film and Photography in Bradford opened its screen, 14 years ago.

But London's Imax mania does not stop there. The Science Museum is to build an Imax that will open in 2000 as part of its Wellcome Wing, and Warner Brothers plans an Imax as part of its multi-screen development inside the former Battersea power station.

Outside London, the trend

for big screens is spreading like a rash. Bristol, Bournemouth, Birmingham, Belfast, Manchester and Dublin will all have Imax screens by the millennium.

This is a remarkable turnaround for a film format which is 25 years old and has never really taken off in Hollywood. The technology is based on a film frame that is 10 times bigger than a conventional 35mm frame. This gives images a much higher resolution and allows the film to be shown on screens so big that they spread outside the audience's field of vision.

"There has been a complete dearth of screens and now there is an explosion," says a delighted Alison Roden of Euromax, the format's trade body. "It is being driven by two things. In America there has been a surge of interest as multiplex cinema operators try to give themselves a unique selling point. They can either have better popcorn, or they can have an Imax."

"And then the National Lottery has had a huge part to play, because of the amount of money earmarked for capital projects."

But the suspicion shared by some that Imax screens are the ice-skating rinks and ten-pin bowling alleys of the Nineties: unimaginative municipal regeneration schemes that are destined to be white elephants. Ms Roden, naturally, disagrees: "The growth is not coming from institutions but from commercial companies. More films are being made every year and people are making money from Imax films."

Jon Snow: To viewers he combines 'gravitas and a whiff of the anti-establishment' Photograph: PA



Channel 4 savours the viewers' feeling for Snow

Channel 4 plans to revolutionise in its newsroom, but wants to hold on to what research identifies as its main asset – Jon Snow.

Paul McCann, Media Correspondent, asks why Britain's most upmarket newsreader is so crucial to the channel.

"Viewers also believe that Snow is a reporter himself, getting his own stories, he's not just a pretty face," says the Channel 4 insider. And Snow became the story himself in September, when Buckingham Palace went out of its way to rubbish his story that The Queen had originally opposed any kind of state funeral for Diana, Princess of Wales.

Indeed, Snow's anti-establishment tendencies are not confined to his lurid ties. He was sent down from Liverpool University for his anti-apartheid activities and has set up and run a day centre for homeless people. In the Eighties he was carpeted by ITN bosses for signing a petition in support of the striking miners. But Channel 4 feels his presence can help to maintain continuity in what is likely to be a revolutionay shake-up of its news output.

Beyond concerns about the presentation of news, the channel's chief executive, Michael Jackson, is also interested in new views on the philosophy the news programme should have, and the kind of agenda it should follow.

He is asking producers to suggest a new template for the show, to dispense with the structured "package" of filmed report followed by interview and he also wants to see how far "off the beaten track" Channel 4 could go with its own stories.

However, sources at Channel 4 dismissed out of hand speculation that the planned changes are related to Channel 5 moving its news to 7pm.

Mr Jackson is being encouraged to look at more than just the form of the programme, but also its structure and organisation.

"The idea of one news provider for the channel is questionable," said Bernard Clark, head of Clark Productions, which makes *Dispatches*. "There are a thousand independent producers in the UK, many of them run by former editors of *Newshight* or *Panorama*, and they could all feed stories to one central production crew. It's the kind of distinctive and innovative programming Michael Jackson says he wants."

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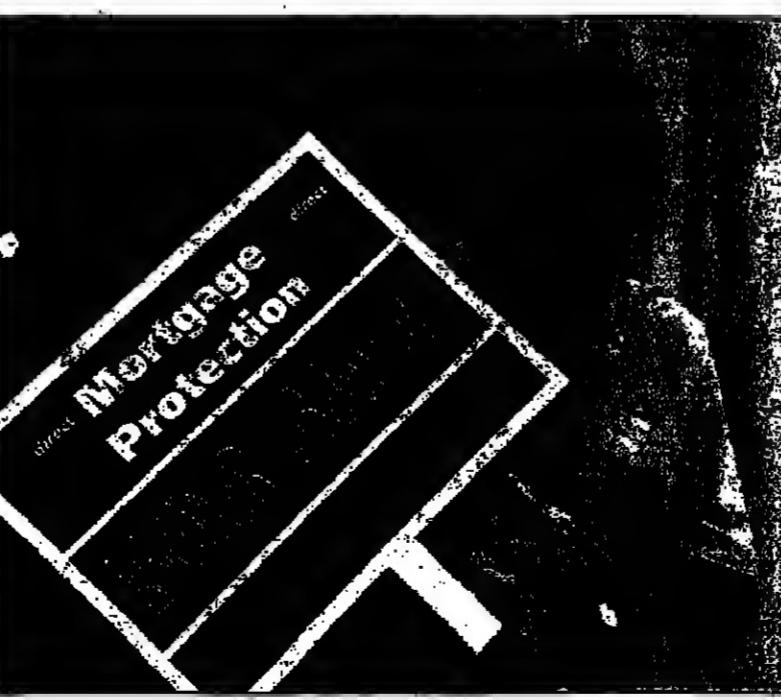
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Blair says Tories will recover – eventually

Tony Blair yesterday warned Labour MPs to keep their eye on the Tories, but that they would remain unelectable for so long as they were split on Europe. Anthony Bevins, Political Editor, reports on the continuing Euro-wars.

The Prime Minister and William Hague clashed over Europe, the Social Chapter and the Amsterdam Treaty during Commons questions yesterday, after Mr Blair had told the Parliamentary Labour Party that in time the Tories would get their act together – “But we must make it very difficult for them to recover.”

He said that for so long as Michael Howard and Lord Parkinson and others remained in such senior positions, it would be very hard for Mr Hague to portray the Tories as a party offering a fresh start. “And they will continue to be divided, which in itself can make

them unelectable,” Mr Blair said.

With those divisions remaining on open display over the new leader’s line against the single currency, the Shadow Cabinet last night agreed to oppose next Tuesday’s Commons second reading of the Amsterdam Treaty legislation – which could also incite pro-European Tories to defy their party whip.

In an evident attempt to unite his party yesterday, Mr Hague used Commons questions to round on the Government for signing up to the Social Chapter at Amsterdam.

The Conservative leader repeatedly attacked Mr Blair for signing away British rights to block extensions of the Social Chapter to small firms. He told Mr Blair: “The assurances you offered businesses about European regulation before the election are like the assurances you gave students and people with pension funds – absolutely worthless.”

After the issue had been repeatedly raised by a series of Tory backbenchers, the Prime Minister told Nicholas Winterton MP: “There are no mea-

sures in the Social Chapter that are going to cause problems for British business. It’s just absolute nonsense.”

“We were told before the election that, if Britain signed the Social Chapter, 500,000 jobs were going to flood out of the country. It’s all been nonsense.”

“What is important is that we are part of the debate in Europe and that this country – because this is in the interests of business – stands up for British interests best when it represents a positive, constructive, forward-looking government.”

He then added, to Labour cheers: “If the Conservative Party don’t learn that soon, they will spend a long time in opposition learning it.”

But there was one good piece of news for the Tories yesterday. Following the resignations of two pro-Europeans from his frontbench team last week, another pro-European member of the shadow cabinet, Sir Alastair Goodlad, the spokesman for international development, said he was fully behind Mr Hague’s policy on the single currency.

Polly Toynbee, page 23



Labour MP Brian Iddon, dressed as Guy Fawkes, carries out an experiment at the Commons yesterday to promote National Chemistry Week

Photograph: PA

Short outlines ethical aid policy

Clare Short yesterday launched the first White Paper on overseas aid for 20 years, pledging no more “aid for trade”, and a commitment to work towards halving world poverty by 2015. Steve Crowshaw looks at the rhetoric and reality.

“We can succeed.” Perhaps that may prove to be one of the most significant phrases in yesterday’s White Paper – a remarkably upbeat statement, in place of the downbeat realism that we have become accustomed to.

One obvious change is that aid and trade are no longer intrinsically linked, as they once were. The £73m Aid and Trade Provision programme, which helped to fund the controversial Pergau dam project in Malaysia, has been axed.

The ATP supported British businesses seeking contracts in the developing world, where trade was sometimes perceived as more important than aid. Sir Alastair Goodlad, shadow spokesman on international development, criticised its abolition, saying it “provided important projects”. But Ms Short, the Secretary of State, retorted that he should be “ashamed to bring this up”, arguing that the White Paper “gets us to the starting gate – the challenge now is to run the race”.

Ms Short praised Baroness Chalker, her predecessor at the Overseas Development Administration (as it then was), but noted that the previous government had “cut her aid programme, and restricted her in what she wanted to do”.

The White Paper emphasises that “trade and investment policies form a key part of the Government’s approach to development”. Trade and investment are described as “crucial to poverty elimination” – including an emphasis on “including ethical business”.

The White Paper pledges to “start to reverse” the decline in UK spending on aid, and “reaffirms” a commitment to the United Nations declared target of 0.7 per cent of GNP.

The response from aid agencies was divided. The World Development Movement complained that the Government was “kidding itself” if it thought that poverty could be halved by 2015. But Diana Melrose, policy director of Oxfam, said the targets were “good news for the millions of people living in poverty around the world”. She talked of a “forward-looking strategy” which “represents a major step forward”.

Simon Maxwell of the Overseas Development Institute, a think-tank on international development, argued that the White Paper “gets us to the starting gate – the challenge now is to run the race”.



A visit

Traffic is to be restricted in London's two green squares, transforming them for the benefit of pedestrians.

It is one of the most expensive of the capital's millennium projects, could also be the most lasting, says Simon Environment Correspondent

The Government is building a new bus station and bus interchange in Victoria, London, E1

Paisley voters set to test Labour's mettle

Voters in Paisley South go to the polls today in the first real test for the Government since its general election victory. Stephen Goodwin watched the final day of campaigning.

The “wee boy”, as Paisley women of maturer years call Labour’s Douglas Alexander, looked in confident mood yesterday as he glided through the centre of Scotland’s largest town.

And well he might. Voters seem to have separated the pristine young candidate from the grubby machinations of Old Labour in Paisley and surrounding Renfrewshire and it is too early to blame the Government for the town’s high unemployment.

The Scottish National Party needs a swing from Labour of 17 per cent to take the seat left vacant by the suicide of Gordon McMaster in July.

The figure is not unprecedented, but the SNP has struggled to create any of the buzz which presses a by-election.

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Ban on witness payments

Payments such as those made by newspapers to some witnesses in the Fred West trial will be outlawed under a draft Bill to be published in this session of Parliament, it was confirmed yesterday by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine.

In a report to the Culture, Media and Sport Select Com-

mittee, which had called for the action, Lord Irvine said the Government would follow the draft Bill with legislation “as soon as we conveniently can”.

Five witnesses received money to reveal details of the notorious killings by West at his house in Cromwell Street, Gloucester.

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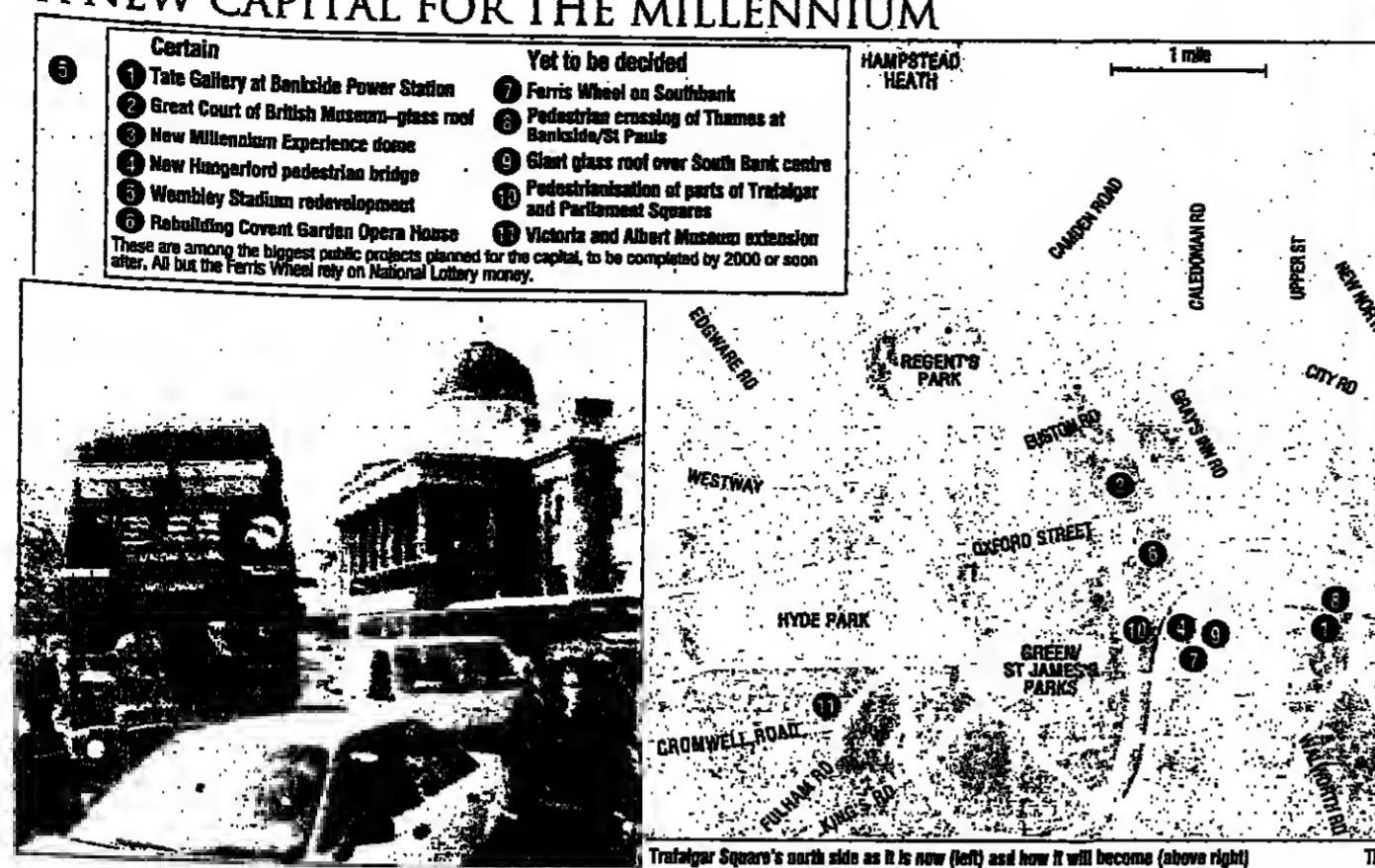
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11/ENVIRONMENT NEWS

THE INDEPENDENT
THURSDAY
6 NOVEMBER 1997

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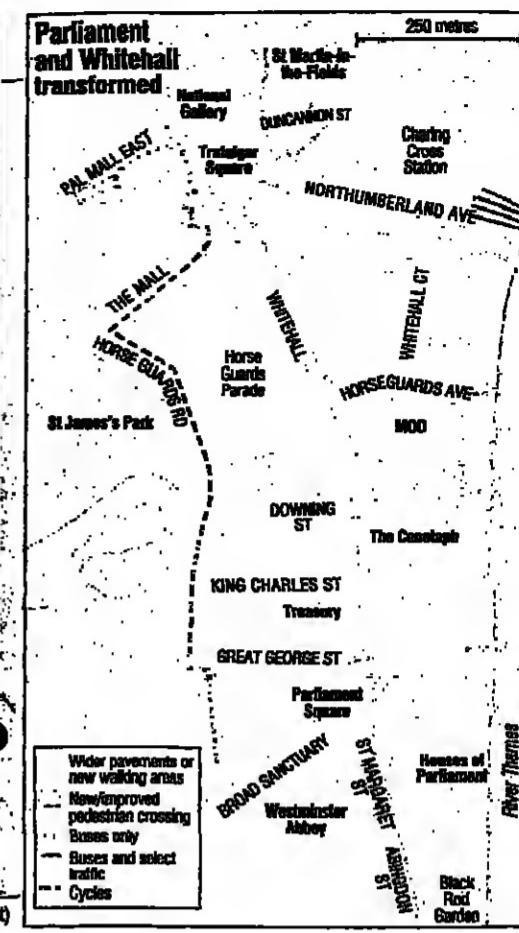
A NEW CAPITAL FOR THE MILLENNIUM



Trafalgar Square's north side as it is now (left) and how it will become (above right)



The more radical of the two options for cutting traffic and boosting walking in Westminster (right)



A vision of the heart of London without traffic

Traffic is to be restricted in London's two greatest squares, transforming them for the benefit of pedestrians.

It is one of the least expensive of the capital's millennium projects. It could also be the most lasting, says Nicholas Schoon, Environment Correspondent.

The Government yesterday gave backing to plans to curb traffic and boost walking in the most visited and most famous part of London - Trafalgar and Parliament Squares and Whitehall.

Members of the public are being asked to give their views by the end of January, then a final plan will be drawn up and an application for National Lottery funding made.

Yesterday, Lord Rothschild, chairman of the Heritage Lottery Fund, said he would be delighted to help fund the project which will cost between £20m and £40m. Work could begin before 2000.

With the scheme having won such enthusiastic support from its inception under the previous government, it seems certain to go ahead in some form. But there are two versions or strategies, one more radical, awkward and expensive than the other,

and there are strong pressures to take the easier option.

"It's the most exciting project I've seen for a while," said John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, yesterday. It would "turn our squares back to the people and away from being roundabouts".

Under both strategies, the busy road dividing Trafalgar Square from the National Gallery would be closed to all traffic and turned into part of the square. So would the road on the southern side of Parliament Square, which cuts it off from Westminster Abbey.

Under the more radical Strategy 2, two more sides of Trafalgar Square would be closed to traffic, apart from bus-

es and cycles. Furthermore, the busy road running past the Houses of Parliament, which carries all the traffic running alongside the Thames north bank, would also be shut to traffic, apart from buses, taxis, cycles and vehicles driving to Parliament itself.

A team of planners, commissioned by the Government and headed by the architect Sir Norman Foster, made a detailed study of the area which covers about half a square mile. They questioned thousands of drivers and pedestrians, and even discreetly trailed tourists struggling to walk through the area and cross busy roads. The current arrangements "treat pedestrians

like cattle", said Sir Norman.

The planners have come up with a mass of further changes for the area, including new or improved pedestrian crossings, extra bus lanes, widened pavements, and a new cycle route along St James's Park. They want many car parking spaces, mostly used by civil servants, to be removed, with their place taken by open terraces and pavement cafés. And they call for the public to be allowed to walk through some of the impressive open spaces surrounded by government buildings and currently closed off, including a great circle hidden within the Treasury.

The aims are to make walking safer and easier, and to stop

the view and atmosphere of famous buildings being destroyed by heavy traffic. Parliament Square is a Unesco World Heritage Site, along with such monuments as the Taj Mahal, the Great Pyramids and Stonehenge.

The less radical Strategy 1 would increase congestion in central London slightly. Bus journey times across central London should be unaffected however because, while buses will be slowed down by the heavier traffic away from the squares, they will speed up near to and between them.

Strategy 2 would cause more congestion, spreading into surrounding London boroughs. Both Westminster City Council and London Transport told a

press conference yesterday that they had major reservations about the second option. But they pointed out that if the Government took wider measures to reduce traffic in central London, then it could work.

Sir Norman Foster said his team had found that one in five of the cars passing through the two squares and Whitehall had no need to be there. "They could be using the ring roads round London, but they're taking a short cut," he said.

Michael Gwilliam, director of the Civic Trust, the urban regeneration pressure group, said: "The Government must back Strategy 2, and not shilly shally ... If we can't curb traffic in the heart of London, with all of

its public transport, then where can we?"

The project, entitled World Squares for All, will take its place among several other public projects for London funded largely by National Lottery money, from the Millennium Experience Dome in the east to the complete rebuilding of Wembley Stadium in the west. Along with major new public transport systems, such as the Jubilee Line Tube extension, these structures will transform the capital.

People can see the plans and submit their views at an exhibition in the Royal United Services Institute, next to the Banqueting House in Whitehall, today, tomorrow and on Saturday.

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Killers hack their way out of prison

About 150 police wearing flak-jackets hunted late yesterday for five escaped prisoners, including three murderers serving life sentences and described as the most dangerous people in Australia.

"We consider these five escapees to be the most dangerous and desperate people on the streets of Australia at the moment and police are absolutely petrified and terrified as to what they may do to remain at large," a police media spokesman, Brian Swift, told a news conference.

The prisoners, said by police to be armed, used diamond-encrusted wire to break out of Brisbane's maximum-security Sir David Longland jail in the early hours of yesterday.

Police used helicopters after possible sightings in Brisbane's central business district and had earlier warned people in the city's outer suburbs to lock their houses and cars.

Using diamond-encrusted "angel wire" smuggled into the jail, the prisoners cut through the bars of their cells, then used their bed sheets to wrench open the bars, said prison officials.

The prisoners then used cell chairs to scale a fence crowned with two rolls of razor wire.

After cutting through three more security fences, the prisoners reached the jail's perimeter fence and were thrown bolt-cutters by two people outside the jail.

The accomplices, armed with a high-powered rifle, began shooting at a guard who was chasing the prisoners as the jail's alarm began to sound.

A volley of 10 to 12 shots was fired, several piercing an armoured prison van which was patrolling the jail.

"When the patrol vehicle got to within 70 metres [230 feet] of the perimeter it was fired upon and both of its batteries were destroyed," said the Corrective Services Commission spokesman, Stan Macionski.

One bullet pierced the unarmoured roof of the van but the two officers inside were not hit.

The prisoners and two accomplices then ran down a road to a waiting car and sped off. A police car gave chase, but pulled back when fired on.

The Queensland Police Minister, Russell Cooper, has ordered all prisoners to be locked in their cells pending a report on the massive security breach.

"This is the first time we have had a concerted external assault on a perimeter in such a ruthless and cold, calculated way," said Mr Macionski.

One of the prisoners, Brendan Abbott, is nicknamed the "Post Card Bandit" for sending police taunting holiday picture postcards of himself holding bags of money while on the run.

Abbott, 35, was serving a 12-year term for bank robberies. The other prisoners are Jason Nixon, 27, serving life for murder, Oliver Alincic, 32, serving life for murder, Andrew Jeffrey, 20, serving life for murder, and Peter Sterling, 31, serving 13 years and seven months for deprivation of liberty.

Reuters - Brisbane



Under a cloud: A motorcyclist and passenger ducking beneath a fallen electricity pylon after tropical storm Linda hit the Kui Buri district, 143 miles south-west of Bangkok, in Thailand this week

Photograph: AP

Albright sees deal on keeping US troops Bosnia

Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, said yesterday that "a consensus is developing" between the administration and Congress that there should be some form of United States military presence in Bosnia once the mandate of the Nato-led commitment expires next June.

Ms Albright said that her conclusion was based on a meeting on Tuesday involving President Bill Clinton and a large group of law-makers.

Speaking to reporters during a photo session with Klaus

Kinkel, the German Foreign Minister, Ms Albright said Mr Clinton had not made a decision on the issue. But she said there is a "clear consensus" for carrying out the terms of the Dayton peace accord.

She added that there was agreement also that the Europeans maintain some kind of military or police functions once the Nato mandate expires on 30 June.

The law-makers said, after a two-hour meeting at the White House, that Mr Clinton ap-

peared inclined to extend the US commitment in Bosnia in a yet-to-be-defined fashion.

Meeting with about 40 members of the House and Senate late on Tuesday, the President and the Defense Secretary, William Cohen, heard differing views about approaches toward Bosnia. "But with respect to the importance of the US stakes and the stability in the region, there was a general consensus,"

Ann Luzzatto, a White House spokeswoman, said. While the Republican-led

Congress has taken a sceptical view of keeping US troops in Bosnia, a senior Republican senator, John Warner of Virginia, offered strong support for the President.

"It's very clear if the United States pulls out, these unfortunate people will be back at each others' throats again, and we will have lost close to \$8bn [£8bn] of US taxpayers' money,"

Mr Warner said as he left the White House. "I've been coming here 19 years to these meetings and there was not really one voice of any dissent," he said. "It was constructive: You are the commander in chief, we're going to back you, but here are our ideas."

Tom Daschle, Senate minority leader, immediately seconded Mr Warner's remarks.

"Republicans and Democrats alike have indicated they want to work with the President to construct a strategy that will take us beyond June," he said. "... I think we all recognise the importance of international involvement."

AP, Estes Park, Colorado

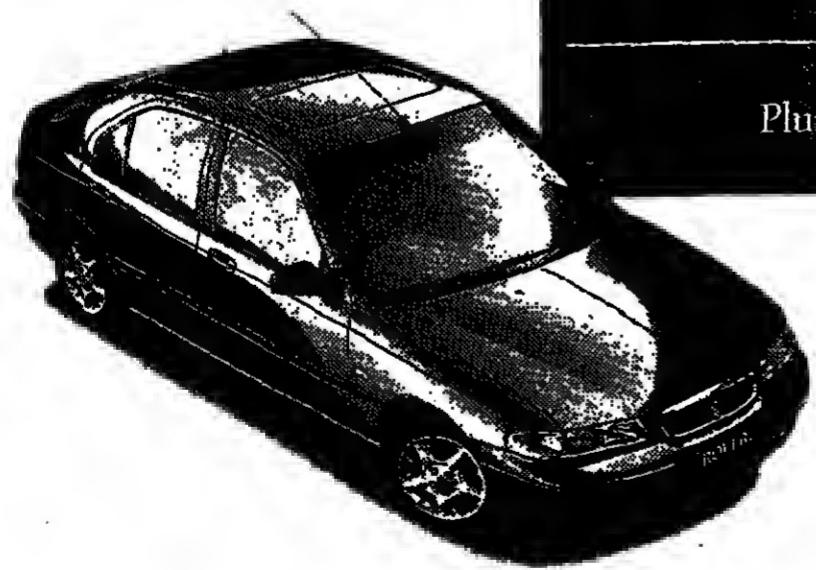
Watch that space

A report of a previously unknown gamma-ray halo around the Milky Way has puzzled and excited scientists. The finding by Nasa's Compton observatory, a satellite that carries a gamma-ray telescope, was presented at a meeting of the American Astronomical Society. "There is nothing out there that should obviously be making gamma rays," said Dave Dixon, a researcher. "Some high-energy process is occurring out there."



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14/11/97 150

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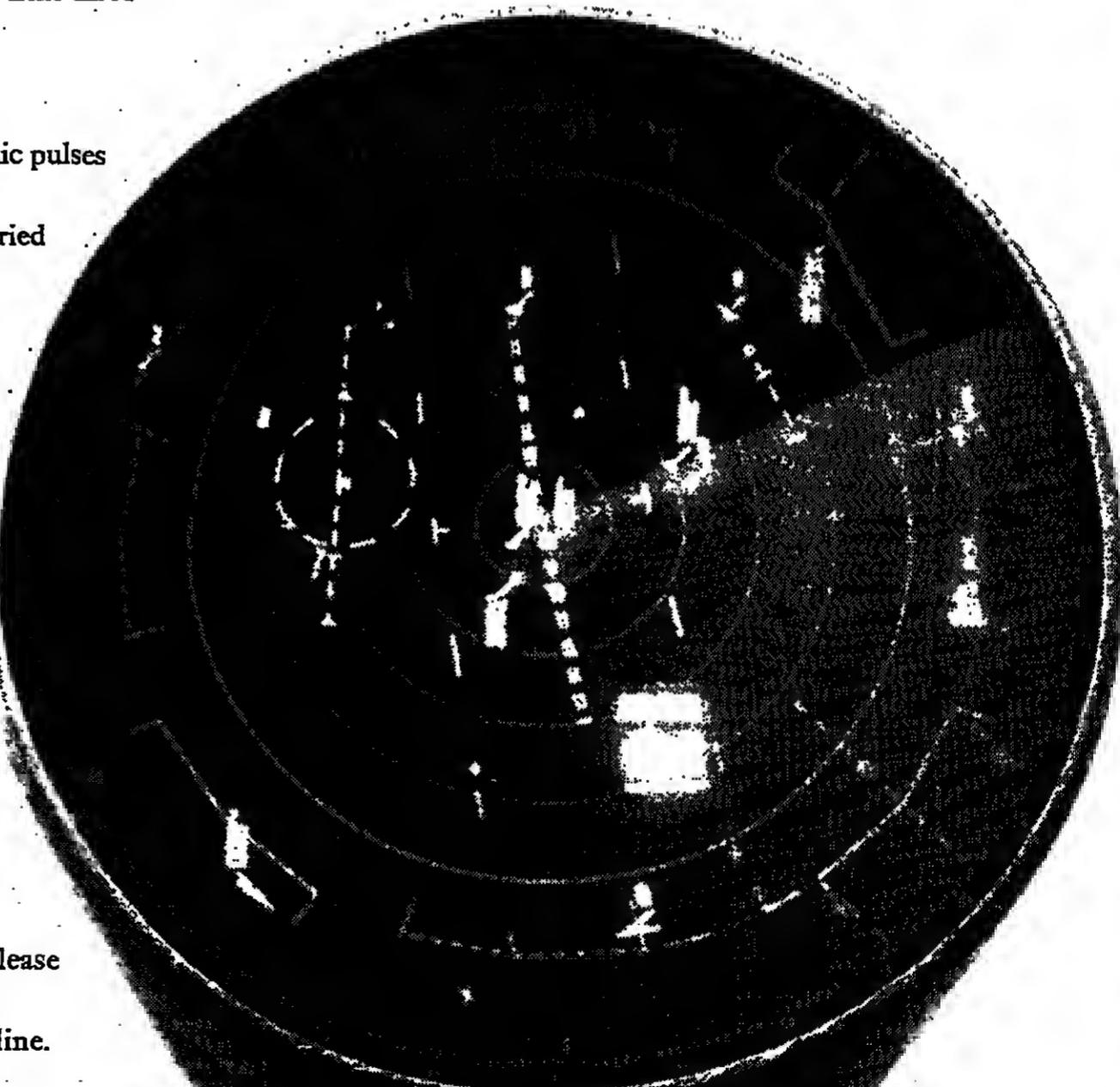
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Just call us on 0800 714614.



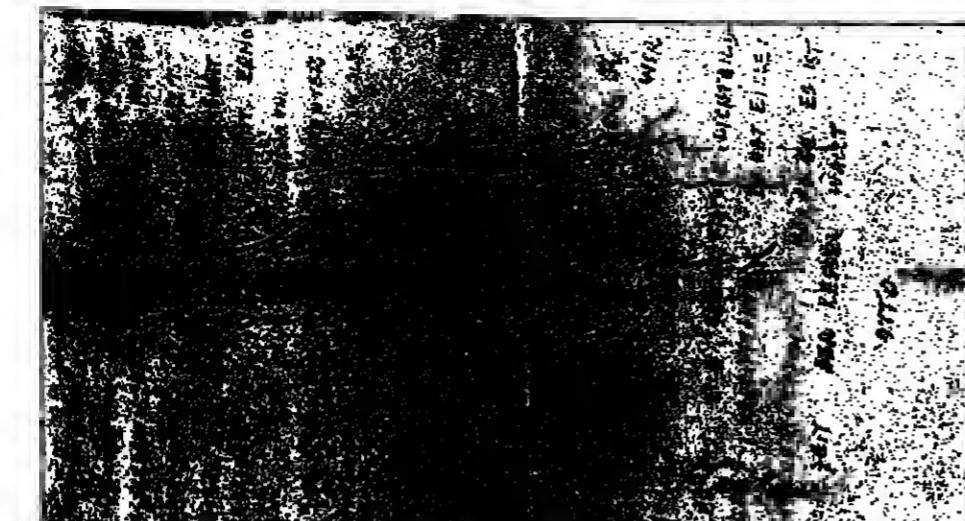
A flow of good ideas.

How a love letter told story of the murder of a nation

A seemingly innocuous postcard sent by a woman in Cracow to Romania in 1943 contains a secret message written in invisible ink describing terrible conditions in a concentration camp. Patrick Cockburn in Jerusalem writes about who might have sent the message and why.

Even at first glance the postcard carries with it a sense of menace. There is the postage stamp of the German administration in Poland with the eagle and swastika. It, in turn, bears a stamp commemorating Nazi party day in August 1943. It is addressed to a Jew in Bucharest and there, on the left hand side of the card, is the heavy black stamp of the Romanian censor.

The visible message is innocuous enough. It is from Lola Bergman in Krakow, dated 20 August 1943, who writes in black ink in German: "My darling, I remember you with love. Lola. 20 August 1943, Krakow."



The message should be so brief. But when the card is rubbed with a hot iron the faint brown lines of a second and much longer message, disjointed but finally, become visible. It describes a concentration camp. "Death camp, the rest deceit" are the opening words. He or she speaks of the "incinerator, agonising hell, children of four and under." After the first line-

and-a-half the message switches from cursive to block capitals, as if the writer feared the words would not be understood. Some, such as "Walpurgisnacht - the night of the witch-hunt", are cryptic. Others are graphic, mentioning starvation and "oat porridge" and referring to an epidemic. The writer speaks of torture, terror and "killing gas". In a switch of topic, and

speaking as if the intended reader would know those involved, the writer says somebody's "wound has healed. I was very afraid of his illness." The rest of the message gives the impression of resistance activity. The letter is signed "Otto".

It is a unique document, given to the International Centre of Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memo-

rial in Jerusalem, by the daughter of Theodore Feldman, who obtained it 20 years ago in Bucharest. Mr Feldman, a Hungarian Jew who lived in Romania before emigrating to Israel, survived Theresienstadt, a forced-labour camp for Jews in Czechoslovakia which the Nazis designed as a "show concentration camp" which foreign visitors could visit, to counter

Jews had been sent in 1943, than Auschwitz.

The identity of Otto, the ostensible author of the message, is equally elusive, even supposing he used his real first name. Mr Greenstein, assisted by Vagi Zoldan, who is writing his PhD on Adolf Eichmann, believes he might be Otto Haas, an Austrian social democrat and opponent of the Nazis who belonged to a resistance organisation based in Vienna.

Haas was arrested in 1942 and executed in Berlin in 1944. He was therefore in a position to know what was happening in the camps. There are two other pieces of evidence: his handwriting, of which Mr Greenstein has several examples, is similar to that on the postcard written in invisible ink. Secondly, the Haas organisation commonly placed names and places at the end of a message - on all other cards they are at the beginning - to indicate a hidden text.

Mr Greenstein says there is one simple pointer indicating that Lola Bergman knew her letter was to carry a second, secret text. Her message is very short. All other such cards he has examined are crammed with information about the flight and survival of family and friends. Lola's prosaic love letter, however, left plenty of space for Otto to tell of terrible experiences and crimes.

Washington - Tuesday's state and local elections were won by the Republican Party yesterday as a clear precursor of next year's mid-term Congress election. At the results suggest, however, that parts of voters' interests were not as well served as expected.

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Victory of a sort for woman enslaved in Auschwitz

A Jewish woman forced to work in an Auschwitz munitions factory during the war finally won partial compensation yesterday from the German government.

The Bonn court's verdict could trigger an avalanche of similar claims by thousands of former Nazi slaves, reports Imre Karacs.

The German government, on the other hand, has paid DM100bn since the war to groups representing Holocaust survivors. Jews in the US, Western Europe and Israel have collected one-off payments and pensions. East European Jews missed out, with Communists, homosexuals, Gypsies and other minorities.

Mrs Merin had not been paid because she only emigrated from Poland to Israel in 1969, by which time compensation for Israeli slaves had been settled.

"Many people are still waiting," said judge Heinz Sonnenberger as he read out yesterday's verdict. Among these are an estimated 30,000 former Nazi slaves who have been banging on closed doors all these years.

"Basically, some people will have a right to compensation now," said the women's representative, Baron Klaus von Münchhausen.

"I imagine some of them would stand a good chance."

But the baron, who has twice been sacked from the civil service for helping enemies of the German state, was outraged by the decision to redress the other women.

"All foreign slave-labourers have a right to remuneration for wages, and we do not agree that the court can exclude these claims," he fumed, dismissing Mrs Merin's reward as a "tip".

The "employees" received no payment but the SS was paid a daily "hire charge". The German state had, therefore, benefited financially from this arrangement, said the defence.

Establishing gain and responsibility has vexed similar claims in the past. German companies used 12 million slaves during the war, mostly Jews, concentration camp inmates and citizens of occupied countries. Most perished in the factories, but there are a few survivors.

Some of the companies that grew rich on their toils, such as Krupp, Siemens and Volkswagen, made voluntary payments to the victims but survivors' groups say they tended to be derisory. Until yesterday's verdict, no one had sued successfully for compensation.

Fifty-two years after liberation from the world's most notorious death-camp, and a fleeting five years after submitting her legal claim, Rywka Merin is to receive the reward of her labours.

By the decision of a German court, Germany owes the Israeli woman DM15,000 (£5,350) plus interest for five years. It may not seem much for assembling grenades for the Wehrmacht 12 hours every day for three years, nor does it compensate for the beatings, degradation and hunger, but a principle has been established: even slaves are entitled to some pay.

Mrs Merin was one of 22 women who had been suing the German government for five years. The court ruled yesterday that the other 21, two of whom

died during the hearing, were not entitled to a single pfennig.

They received compensation in the past for the suffering they endured and merited no more remuneration.

The woman had been "employed" by the German company Union, which went into liquidation in 1994. Union provided food and lodgings - the familiar kind in Auschwitz, including one bowl of watery soup a day. One plaintiff told the court they were woken at 3am every day and marched for two hours to the factory.

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15/AMERICA VOTES

Republicans win the election issues

Washington – Results of Tuesday's state and local elections were hailed by the Republican Party yesterday as a significant victory and a happy precursor of next year's mid-term Congressional elections. A closer look at the results suggests, however, that party political considerations were not at the forefront of voters' intentions, as Moy Dejevsky explains.

Or the face of it, Tuesday was an excellent night for the Republican Party. They won both the state governor posts that were being contested, in Virginia and New Jersey, and in Virginia took all three top state posts for the first time: governor, lieutenant governor and attorney general.

Rudolph Giuliani was re-elected mayor of New York City, with a double-figure majority—much increased from his 29 per cent victory four years ago, and Republican mayors elsewhere retained their posts.

elsewhere retained their posts. The Republicans also kept easily the one Congressional seat on offer - the New York seat vacated by Susan Molinari who defected from the House of Representatives to become television talk-show host and spend more time with her family". The chairman of the Republican National Committee, Jim Nicholson, who was in Virginia to support the victorious candidate for governor, Jim Gilmore, said that the Virginia campaign could provide a model for next year's Congressional election campaign.

The night was hardly the disaster for the Democrats that



Headline news: Rudolph Giuliani holding a copy of the New York Post declaring his re-election as the city's mayor

Photograph: Mike Segars/Reuters

these results suggest, however. They lost in New York to an incumbent mayor who had been attracted support across the party divide for restoring safety to a city that was regarded before his election as dangerous and in irreversible decline. The polls – received 70 per cent of the traditionally Democrat New York Jewish vote, against his Jewish Democrat challenger. Yesterday, Mr Giuliani intimated that he would not rule out using his success as a spring-board for higher office.

and in irreversible decline. The extent to which Mr Giuliani was seen as first as saviour of New York and only second as a Republican was illustrated by the fact that he had a support group of "Democrats for Giuliani" and – according to exit

from Jim McGreevey, a local Democrat. Ms Whitman, a prominent Republican sometimes fancied as a presidential candidate in 2000, retained her post by only 1 per cent.

The forces at work in this election, however, were remarkably similar to those at work in Virginia. Mr McGreevey trumped Ms Whitman on the very policy, a traditionally Republican one, that had brought her a surprise victory four years before — cutting tax-

es. And he almost succeed

In New Jersey, a state - like Virginia - with large numbers of suburban commuters, Mr McGreevey attacked Ms Whitman for allowing local property taxes to be the highest in the country and for not curbing increases in car insurance rates - also the highest in the country. Even though the governor has no direct authority over either property taxes Ms Whitman was thrown on to the defensive.

In Virginia the Republicans pledged to abolish the state property tax on cars - and won on this one issue. A majority of traditional Democrat voters who actually voted Democrat on Tuesday, said that their top priority was education spending and standards. About one-third of Democrats, however, said that for them the car tax was the priority issue, and they had voted Republican. As one commentator said, the message from both states seemed to be: "Don't mess with our cars."

Texans back policy of affirmative action

Voters in the north-western state of Oregon decided by a large majority to retain a law permitting terminally ill action as a national policy, despite President Bill Clinton's strong support for it.

law permitting terminally ill patients to end their lives, reinforcing a provision approved three years ago but never implemented. In Houston in Texas, voters decided by a slightly slimmer majority not to end the 13-year-old policy of affirmative action.

Both these referendums — two of 43 state and local issue ballots held in different parts of the United States along with Tuesday's elections — had been closely watched because of their wider implications. At least nine other states are considering the introduction of "assisted suicide" laws, while the Houston vote on affirmative action was seen as a last opportunity for supporters of affirmative action to hold on to their gains.

The outgoing mayor of Houston, Bob Lanier, who had campaigned tirelessly for its retention, said of the 54 to 46 per cent vote: "I think this is a decent city with decent instincts ... if the city perceives a position as being

action to stall a growing backlash against the policy that favours women and ethnic minority candidates for public service jobs and grants.

Last year, California's

racist, it will lose."

The vote in Oregon, which went 60-40 per cent in favour of keeping a regulated form of euthanasia, showed a bigger majority.

Last year, Californians had voted by a large majority to end the state's affirmative action policy, and the Supreme Court this week allowed that decision to stand. At federal level the courts are expected to end affirmative action in college admissions.

Showed a bigger majority than the 51-49 per cent result three years ago. The pro-euthanasia position won, despite a fierce opposition campaign spearheaded by the Catholic church.

— *Mary Dejevsky*

— Mary Dejevský

CLINTON COMES TO AID OF WORKERS

President Clinton yesterday outlined a plan to help American workers displaced by overseas competition in his bid to win congressional approval of expanded trade negotiating power.

strong approval of expanded trade negotiating power.

Mr Clinton said he wanted to provide \$750m in additional funding to retrain dislocated workers in answer to Democratic concerns that new trade deals could lead US companies to relocate abroad to take advantage of cheap labour. "We must greatly expand our efforts to help workers who lose their job because of technology or trade or other economic changes," Mr Clinton said. "We will not create or save jobs in the short run or the long run by refusing to open markets to our products."

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Kremlin palace guards at war after Yeltsin ditches his election financier

Boris Yeltsin has fired a leading member of the small clan of immensely wealthy businessmen close to the Kremlin. As Phil Reeves reports, there is now a split among his most powerful supporters. So far, it only involves words – but sticks and stones could follow.

After months of rumblings, tension within the Kremlin erupted into full view yesterday when Boris Yeltsin fired one of the tycoons who helped secure his re-election. Boris Berezovsky, one of a handful of Russian financiers who joined forces to bankroll Mr Yeltsin's

campaign last year, was dismissed as deputy secretary of the Security Council, producing a rift in the ruling élite surrounding the President.

Yeltsin's move is the result of a

he is out of touch. He told Echo Moskvi radio station that the situation is "what we have been fighting against - one in which an official may enter the Presidential office and make

he is out of touch. He told Echo Moskvi radio station that the situation is "what we have been fighting against - one in which an official may enter the Presidential office without anyone noticing".

His job was widely perceived as a reward from Mr Yeltsin for his support last year, he is credited with furthering the peace deal in Chechnya.

ident's office and have any decree signed."

Mr Berezovsky's media stable includes several other leading publications - notably, the newspaper *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* and the respected magazine *Ogonyok* - which seem likely to form the vanguard in a damaging media war between pro-Yeltsin factions. Mr Nemtsov applauded the firing as "absolutely right".

While in government, he claimed to have suspended his business activities but tensions surfaced earlier this year when he lost out in a bid for a stake in the state telecommunications monopoly Svyazinvest - which went to a consortium which included the international financier George Soros. His outrage was duly reflected in the coverage given to the issue by his media outlets.

“absolutely right”, saying Mr Berezovsky had sought to combine his government work with business activities.

From the moment he entered government, Mr Berezovsky had been under fire from

sue by his media outlets.

The issue now is whether he will turn his considerable media fire-power against the President. Yesterday Mr Berezovsky indicated the opposite, saying

tered government, Mr Berezovsky was the source of controversy. However, although indicated the opposite, saying there was no alternative to Mr Yeltsin.



As a young man: Rembrandt, aged 26, gazes from his newly authenticated 1632 self-portrait which went on show at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, yesterday after hanging unrecognised for years in a Paris art dealer's bedroom

Blair reaches for the sky as French arrive

President Chirac and Prime Minister Lionel Jospin arrive tonight for the latest Anglo-French summit. As Rupert Cornwell and John Lichfield explain, the omens are set for a friendly meeting. But striking French truckers and the planned single European currency could yet spoil the show

offset the technocratic power of an independent, unelected European Central Bank.

Mr Blair will be prohin French intctions for the bank after Mr Chirac and Mr Jospin made their proposal this wee nf a Fréoch candidate, Jean Claude Trichet, Governor of the Bank of France, as its head. I throws into doubt prospects o the former Dutch ceotral-banl governor Wim Duisenberg, and has caused consternation in Bonn, a strong supporter of M Duisenberg, and in the Hague France is also not convinced o the merits of a German sug gestioo that Britain should be given a seat nn the bank's six man board, even though it is outside EMU.

The summit will come giftwrapped with bilateral agreements: an Internet link between Freoch and British schools, Franco-British co-operation on recruitment techniques for a volunteer military to which France is converting and an announcement that a children's garden will be laid out in Paris, named in honour of Diana, Princess of Wales.

But there are potential areas of trouble, most obviously the truckers' strike. Neither side wants it to dominate proceedings, certainly not the French Socialist government, which does not want to venture into the citadel of New Labour half-paralysed by an Old Labour industrial dispute.

But if it is not settled by this evening, there will be no avoiding the topic. And whatever happens, British officials say, Mr Blair will raise the matter of unpaid compensation for losses incurred by British hauliers from similar disruptions in 1996.

are united on insisting United Nations arms inspectors must be allowed to work unhindered. But Britain will be watching for any hint of backsliding by the French, given the abstentions of France, Russia and China on a UN sanctions resolution last month, which gave President Saddam Hussein the opening to

Bardot has the last word

A French court yesterday ordered Brigitte Bardot's former husband and his publisher to pay her 50,000 francs (£5,300) in damages for having invaded her privacy in a kiss-and-tell book. But the court threw out the actress's request to seize copies of Jacques Charrier's book *My Answer to BB*, published by Michel Lafon, which tells his side of their three-year marriage that ended in divorce in 1962. They had one child, Nicolas, who joined with Mr Charrier in successfully suing Ms Bardot, for invading the privacy in her best selling memoirs. Initial BB, 14P.

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17/RUSSIA

Lenin's bewildered heirs contemplate a lost kingdom

The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, 80 years old this week, produced the world's largest political machine, a sinister apparatus whose tentacles stretched into almost every crevice of the Soviet Empire and beyond. But what does it mean to belong to the Communist Party in today's Russia? Phil Reeves reports from Moscow.

The grandson of Molotov, Stalin's sidekick whose signature sent thousands to their graves, can still remember how the old man would justify his career. "He would say, 'Well, when we took over power, the country was wearing *lapti* - shoes woven from bark. And when I went out of power we had launched Sputnik and had nuclear missiles. Now that's not a bad job, is it?'"

Vyaeslav Nikonov - a 41-year-old political consultant in Moscow, who shares his grandfather's first name but not his politics, says Molotov regretted many things about his life. But "in general he thought he was doing the right stuff", having thrust the Soviet Union into the 20th century and saved it from the Nazis. His grandfather does not appear to have been unduly haunted by the fact that, according to one of Stalin's biographers, Robert Conquest, this included countering 3,167 death sentences in one day - 12 December 1937 - before going to the cinema.

"He felt that the Terror was a necessary part of the preparation for World War Two. Stalin, expecting a big war, was just preventing society from internal splits. At the same time he thought there were mistakes. Too many people suffered through false allegations." Thus were Lenin's tactics of terror administered, underpinning both Stalin's dictatorship and reinforcing the vast apparatus that supported it.

During Molotov's career - which began as a Bolshevik revolutionary under Tsar Nicholas II and ended in 1986, and included three years as Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union - the Communist Party and totalitarianism became one and the same.

Run by a privileged elite, and reinforced by a terrifying security service, it ruthlessly monopolised the Soviet Union's wealth, its political power, its speech, even its history. Then, and until Mikhail Gorbachev

unwittingly brought about its collapse, party membership was an essential requirement for the ambitious, be they teachers, industrialists, policemen or bureaucrats. Now that has all changed.

This week, on Tuesday evening, in a packed hall in Moscow, 2,000 bald or grey-haired heads gazed up at the stage, where an orchestra and choir were assembled beneath a 15ft banner of Lenin. The musicians launched into the hymn of the proletariat, "L'Internationale", the opening number in a concert to mark the 80th anniversary of the October Revolution. Soon the audience was singing along to Russian patriotic songs and ancient hits from Soviet films.

There were speeches about Soviet triumphs in space, and other glories from the past. But, above all, this was a gathering of elderly people who - bewildered by the new, dangerous and valueless Russia - wanted to scuttle dewy-eyed back to the golden era of the Second World War. Without the emblems, you could have been in the British Legion. Yet this gathering also represented the foot soldiers of contem-

nionalism, orthodox Marxism, and Stalinism. By far the largest is the 500,000-strong Communist Party of the Russian Federation, led by the uninspiring Gennady Zyuganov. Its powerbase lies in the State Duma (parliament) which, with the help of nationalist and radical left forces, it controls. But the Duma is weak, and so is Mr Zyuganov. Faced with being marginalised, he conducts an unending balancing act between the right and left - trying to retain influence on the Kremlin by quietly working with the Yeltsin administration, while keeping the left from defecting by decrying Yeltsin's rule as criminal. Part-Communist, part-Russian nationalist, he doggedly woos the Orthodox Church - sacrifice for those purists who believe in the atheist state.

The results of these politics are so unconvincing that his Central Committee has split asunder. One committee member, Tatiana Astrakhankina - infuriated by the leadership's recent decision to abandon a motion of "no confidence" in the Yeltsin government - accused them of "only pretending" to be in opposition. And yet, no obvious replacement to Mr Zyuganov is in view.

Nor does he have many options. The Communists have very little chance of taking control of the key institution in the country, the hugely powerful office of presidency.

The Communist electorate is elderly and rural, largely comprising the millions of Russians who have gained nothing from the reforms, but have lost the security of welfare and the guaranteed (if meaningless) jobs for life provided by the Soviet Union. This core electorate is showing every symptom of being frozen around or below the 30 million mark. In the second round of the presidential election last year, it hit the top of its range, with just over 40 per cent of the vote, some 13 per cent less than Boris Yeltsin. Under Russia's electoral system, the president is elected in a second round from the top two candidates from the first. As they appear incapable of ever mustering half the electorate (unless turnout collapses), the Communists stand no chance of winning.

Tomorrow, the Communists and their allies will unfurl their red flags and parade in honour of the Revolution. There will be plenty of sound and fury, plenty of wishful thinking about forcing through real political change. But it will signify, if not nothing, then very little.

emporary Russian communism. Banned by Boris Yeltsin after the failed coup of August 1991, he returned to politics several years ago, bereft of many former leaders who deftly reinvented themselves as the new ruling élite and *nomadenkava* capitalists. But they operate in a nation with little appetite for party membership, where they seem destined to be denied real power.

The statistics are deceptively flattering. There are now nine Communist organisations in Russia, embracing a spectrum of views from social democracy to Slavic na-



1997, and one thing at least is unchanged: Recruits in the post-Soviet army at the ablutions. Photograph: Obshchaya Gazeta

S...erm...um...err...um...erm...bmm...er...um...cm...hmm...
ah...err...um...erm...hmm...er...um...cm...hmm...er...um...
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19/ARCHITECTURE

on

Even in Bath the millennium builds a head of steam

A brilliant scheme for a new bath house should not only restore Britain's most famous spa but also, says Nonie Niesewand, provide a modern building worthy of its setting.

Bath is to have a new bath house if the Millennium Commission gives its council £6.5m to develop the blue-plaque city as a spa town again.

Bath has Britain's only naturally occurring hot springs and the architect Nicholas Grimshaw has designed a building that uses the heat from the hot springs to heat it, as well as the pools and a Bath stone building behind a glass facade. Steaming away like its inhabitants, this facade will look like the opening to *Phantom of the Opera* with dry ice swirling in mists.

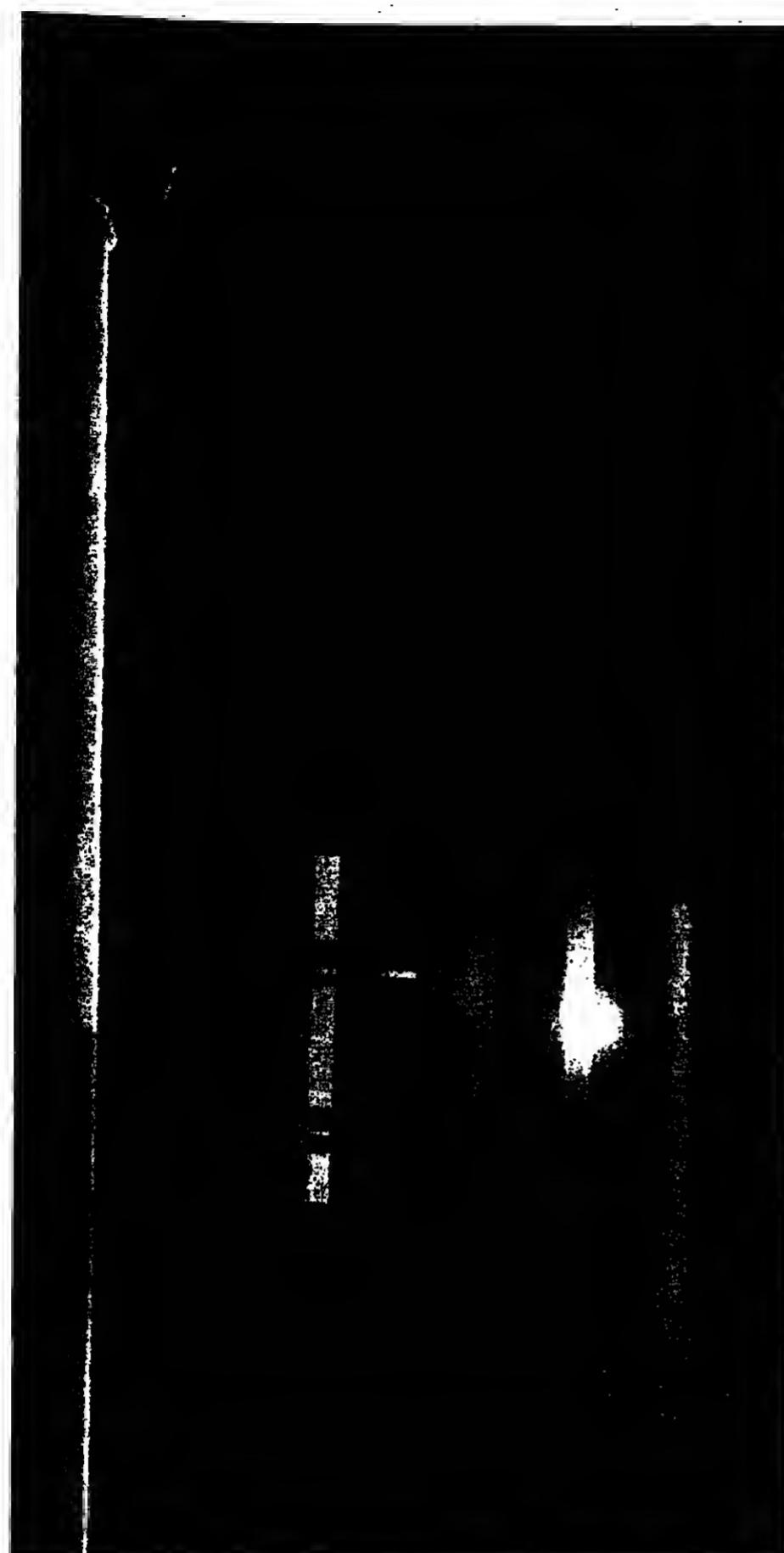
Hundreds of fine glass pipes sandwiched in the glass facade will carry thermal water from the earth's core to heat the building in winter and with venting, cool it in summer. The way he has used water and steam as an integral part of the building illustrates Grimshaw's eco-tech approach to architecture. In the scorching summer of 1992 in Seville he made the British pavilion the coolest glass box with a fountain down the facade.

"It's a great opportunity to reunite Bath with its waters," said the architect, who proposes to connect the new Spa complex to the Roman baths with a wonder wall of steam from the end of Bath Street along the centre of the colonnaded Bath Street to terminate at the Cross Bath, restored as a working spa.

The wooden wall will link four historic listed buildings, the Cross Bath, the Hot Bath, the Pump Room and No 7 Bath Street. And to build the new spa the Beau Street baths will be knocked down. An historic building in a World Heritage site, these municipal baths, built in the 1920s are a great loss. They have an acceptable stone elevation with a pediment at Beau Street, but ugly angled steel trusses, roof lined with asbestos. Besides, they had become rather "seedy" as Paul Simon, project manager for the Bath council, described them.

"Bath is renowned as a city of wonderful architecture but there's not one decent example of 20th-century architecture. This building by Grimshaw will be our last opportunity."

Using water and light, glass and stone, the new Spa building will offer treatment rooms, hot baths and jacuzzis, as well as three swimming pools, available at special discounted rates for local residents. Sensitive to its historic site, proportions of the new building totally mirror the square plan and inner sanctum of the John Wood's Hot Bath, built in 1787. Paul Simon says that more than 300,000 Britons visit spas in Europe each year. So Bath council is determined to use its greatest natural resource, the million and a quarter litres of water arriving daily in three springs at a temperature of 43C to 47C. The heat of the water in the spa will take care of all the energy needs. The pungent, sulphuric natural water will have the iron and sulphur filtered out, by a process which uses no chemicals, to stop it staining the limestone orange, not because



Water world: Computer generated images of the planned bath-house which will have swimming pools, jacuzzis and treatment rooms. The bath stone building will have a glass facade which will hold hundreds of fine glass pipes to carry the thermal waters. The waters will be used to heat the building in winter and cool it in summer.

stresses, backs, skin ailments."

So how do you prevent it getting like Lourdes?

"Cross Bath is the sacred pagan shrine of the Celts, one that the Romans dedicated, and there are those - myself included - who believe that it is a spiritual place within the space. At present it is enclosed by a semi-abandoned Georgian stone wall and glimpsed through a metal grille in the wall. It is atmospheric and moving. That will be left for people to make the pilgrimage to those waters," Mr Simon said. Then there are rooms for serious medical treatment, from straightforward physiotherapy to acupuncture and hydrotherapy.

Throughout the research of the project, Bath council involved a disabled access lobby group in Bath which was given a grant separately to pay for its own architectural consultant to advise on the lifts, ramps and hydraulic platforms for pool areas. And Mr. Simon hiked across France and Germany, Spain and Hungary to discover just why Continental employees build into workers' contracts sabbaticals at a health hydro every few years.

"No shrieking and yelling. More like flotation tanks in the knowledge that waters helps

tumbling from the drawing boards of architects around the country to get the last lottery money from the Millennium Commission, this project has been ingeniously worked through both in style and content. As the Ove Arup engineer Alastair Guthrie says, "Nick Grimshaw has made a real effort to integrate new technology and new ideas within the context of Bath. There is a certain sense of old set against the new - Bath stone buildings against the glass buildings flow from one to the other." Equally important, Bath Spa addresses the way in which all these Millennium-funded projects will be judged in the next century - by projected attendance figures.

Bath is already the fourth biggest tourist attraction in Britain, after London, Edinburgh, and York. The council is determined to make the most of this position with the 18th-century, small and intimate spaces enhanced by the big bold Grimshaw complex that will run as a viable commercial venture. In order to qualify for Millennium Commission funding, a scheme must look back over the last two millennia and forward to the new one.

Fresh black pepper

with a strong trace of humbugs

emerge when you

add a drop of water.

The flavour is cool

to the palate

but spicy on the tongue,

fresh,

citrus and

sweet.

The smartest walk-in cupboard in Paris

A tiny apartment which uses new technology to utilise small spaces has been shortlisted for a major prize. Nonie Niesewand explores the revolutionary rooftop

Estate agents are targeting a new breed of international clients whose desire has to be a "lock up and go". Down-sized, downtown, and smart enough to function without its owner. This rooftop apartment in Paris measures just 8m by 4m, little more than a walk-in cupboard.

But it has other mindblowing virtues as its owner, the international human rights lawyer Chris Avery, Eu-rostars it to his Paris pied-à-terre for the weekend, a phone call from him activates the system which makes the

limestone floors warm up, along with the water. This is smart architecture, and behind smart architecture there's always a smart architect. Mark Guard, the designer of this apartment calls it "a flexible envelope in three inter-connecting boxes". Panels that slide or pivot can make three rooms or open out into open-plan. Between the kitchen and the bathroom is an electro-chromic clear glass door which turns opaque when it is closed (an electrical impulse activates the coating). This kind of responsive glass gives privacy without cutting light from the core.

By singling it out as the winner of the RIBA housing award, to be shortlisted with six other buildings for the Stirling prize later this month, the institute is making a point about houses of the future. It uses the new technology to make the most of small

spaces and shows how to pack in a lot of ideas within a few cubic metres.

Behind sliding doors which are hinged to fold back flat, are three distinct areas for sleeping, bathing and cooking combined with living (folding a guest room with a sofa bed hidden in a stretch limo of a white sofa). All the essentials of modern living are here and neatly concealed: TV, washing machine, fridges, and wardrobes neatly concealed in limestone, glass and wood for a simple structural formality without sacrificing comfort. The sleeping area and the bathing area are at the furthest end of the rectangular apartment, separated by sliding screens.

"We needed to plan it to keep the full visual dimensions of the envelope," said Mark Guard who added that the brief was complicated by the client wanting his friends and family to have somewhere to sleep. So he devised the open plan to have private partitioning when needed.

The exterior is a bit *Bladerunner*, criss-crossed with walkways or flat roof. It used to be the janitor's flat on top of an eight-storey Art Deco building in the 5th arrondissement, reached by taking a lift ride to the top floor. The front door opens right on to the roof, rather than into an apartment, for a walk among the chimney pots to this limestone-fronted house facing west among the satellite dishes.

Mark Guard opened up the view of the domes of the Pantheon and Val



Vision of the future: The electro-chromic clear glass door between the kitchen and bathroom turns opaque when it is closed. The apartment (above left) is on the top of an eight-storey building.

de Grise, the cathedral that is now a military hospital. Then he extended the limestone floor from within on to a terrace for al fresco summer dining.

The original was a very dilapidated cement structure with algae in the interior so it had to be rebuilt and fitted for a price of £118,400. Mark Guard found it cheaper to buy



20/FEATURES

Mark Ravenhill, the gay playwright famous for 'Shopping and Fucking' wrote the third series of 'This Life'. When it was cancelled there were dark rumours that it was his fault. Not so, he tells David Benedict.

"When I first started, people didn't care when I mentioned that I wasn't using any of the old characters," says Mark Ravenhill, the writer entrusted with creating a third series of *This Life*. "But in the end it reached the point where if I said Anna's not going to be in it, entire rooms would go silent. It was extraordinary. People would come up to me and say threateningly, 'I hear you're going to get rid of Miles...' It's so ironic. I'm going to be more publicly lambasted, ridiculed and attacked for dropping a character called Miles from a soap than I am for putting rimming and buggering on the West End stage."

And lambasted he certainly has been. As rumours of the demise of *This Life* grew, and turned into 'fact', fingers were pointed in several directions. Who had brought about this television catastrophe? More fingers pointed at Ravenhill than at anyone else. He was tried by the media and found guilty without hitherto saying a word in his own defence. Mark Ravenhill had killed off *This Life* by writing a story line that was too gay. Shopped it and fucked it, so to speak.

The truth, according to Ravenhill, is less dramatic and more complicated and focuses not upon him and homosexuality, but on Tony Garnett, the 61-year-old producer, a radical since the Sixties who fell out of love with the programme. Why? Because all the experimental reasons for its existence had gone.

Gayness, as Ravenhill points out, certainly was not the problem. The first two series had a dramatically high sex count and from the very beginning the programme quickly established itself as gay cult viewing. This was after all, late-night BBC2.

When Warren, one of the original characters left the show, the gay quotient was continued by the complicated shenanigans of the bisexual despatcher-rider Ferdy - who proved so popular that he is now embazoned upon the poster for the current London stage version of *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

"I looked at the first two series," says Ravenhill, "and said to the producers, 'Well, I think you've done gay men pretty thoroughly. It would almost be nice not to have any for a while.' I was asked to be the lead writer, which meant writing 'the bible' [the outline for the new, thirteen-episode series which Garnett's company wanted to commission] and the key episodes.

"I put a couple of subsidiary gay characters in my bible, and a big lesbian storyline which botched up as the series went on,

but there was less male sexuality than before.

"At that time, the second series had just started, but it wasn't anything like the cult it became by the end."

When Ravenhill met Garnett, whose track record includes such groundbreaking

shenanigans of the bisexual despatcher-rider Ferdy - who proved so popular that he is now embazoned upon the poster for the current London stage version of *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Ravenhill duly accepted the commission but realised that he was in difficult territory; the BBC wanted the third series to be very much like the second, but Garnett was not exactly wedded to that idea.

Although much of the recent gossip was about which of the cast would return, they had already all been killed off. "Tony always liked new stuff. I think he saw it as the fringe theatre of TV. He always wanted new actors, new writers, new directors... it was like a training ground. Having regulars wasn't

in the spirit of the original conception."

Ravenhill even removed the whole idea of lawyers from the equation. He was much more interested in the difficulties of a fresh group of twentysomethings sharing a house and trying to deal with the fact that although they are old friends, they now have vastly differing incomes.

Much of the blame for the *This Life* "tragedy" was dumped on the shoulders of Mark Thompson, controller of BBC2 - who is said to have delayed too

long and thus lost the cast to other projects - but Ravenhill is swift to defend him. "He was accused of dithering but I think that was very unfair."

So what did happen in the end? "Tony called me and said:

"You're going to hate me for this, but I'm not going to make a third series and you'll probably not want to talk to me for a while, but if you ever have an idea for the future, come to me." And that was that."

Ravenhill bears Garnett no ill-will whatsoever, which might seem surprising, except when

you consider that he has been paid to undertake a masterclass in writing drama for television, something most young writers would gladly give their eye-teeth for.

Garnett is notoriously wary of the press and has remained silent but for the brief press release in which he stressed the excellence of Ravenhill's work and the friendliness of the relationship between his own production company and the BBC. As far as he's concerned, "in the end, I decided it was time to move on".

'*This Life*' in his hands! Up to a point. Mark Ravenhill says it was not gay sex that killed off Britain's favourite small-screen co-habitees

Photograph: Adrian Dennis



At last! Exclusive! What really killed off 'This Life'. By the writer many blame

Should I tell my friend the bad news about her new lover?

VIRGINIA IRONSIDE



DILEMMAS

Iris's best friend slept with a new man when they were drunk. Now she's excited, almost preparing for marriage. But Iris has heard that he's told a friend it was all very funny, and he was dragged to bed by her. Should she tell her friend?

Isn't it interesting to see what happens after a one-night stand? He brags to his mates that it was nothing - he was dragged to bed by a beautiful woman and hey, what a stud he is and yet what nightmare it all was; she, on the other hand, justifies it by practically setting a marriage date with wedding bells pealing over the countryside.

What is Iris's role in all this? For she, too, has a part in the drama. Is it a kind of aggression that makes her want to reveal to her friend a confidence that will hurt her desperately, and sabotage any relationship the two lovers might have in the future? Or is it a weird kind of desire for absolution, a belief that honesty is the best policy, however cruel?

Some people can keep secrets. They are the better type of person, those who realise that their knowledge has the potential to hurt. The others are those within whom secrets itch to get out, within whom secrets feel like a burp or a fart, painful blobs of poison gas that need release. The truth is that the man might just have been boasting, and her friend might just have been fantasising. There is always a chance that they may have the opportunity of a real relationship together. And if Iris is so keen on telling the truth, then she shouldn't sit, logically, tell the man, too, about the fact that her best friend has been fantasising about marriage? That would put the cat among the pigeons.

Secrets are very hard to bear. They fester within us, longing for an outlet. Gossip is a use-

ful way of discharging the burden of secrets without actually telling the protagonists in a situation that you know about them. By telling her friend directly that her one-night stand has been behaving badly, at least in conversation, Iris risks losing the friendship. It is the bearer of the bad news, after all, who frequently puts to the sword, not the perpetrator of the act.

She should ask herself which is more painful: losing a friendship, or keeping the secret? Keeping a secret is often agonising, but it is often the right and moral thing to do, for in the long run you find that the secrets are distortions of the truth, and it's only later that you are delighted to find they have no foundation.

I recently had a "frank and truthful" letter from a friend, about a situation in which I had not acquitted myself too well, that hurt me enormously. Had she never written, the problem would have sorted itself out satisfactorily. No more would have been said; time and general goodwill would have sorted it out. She described the letter as a method of "lancing the boil", but the very fact that she had written a letter created another boil. Those who attempt to mediate by telling the truth, in other words, often get killed or punished in the telling.

If I were Iris, I would not attempt to interfere in something that is none of my business anyway. She is a confidante, a friend, not a spy. And if she is a true friend she must bear the burden of confidence she has been given, and do her best to erase it from her mind.

ness. I cry every time I look in the mirror. People say it will grow again, but it could take months or even years. I can't bear the idea of wearing a wig. I just don't look like me any more. But I can't understand why I am so depressed. I

have even felt suicidal, though I would never go ahead with it.

Sara

Letters are welcome, and everyone who has a suggestion quoted will be sent a bouquet from *Independent*. Send comments to me at the Fea-

Who are you to know best? I haven't heard of such a large assumption since the Virgin Mary. What do you mean, you have heard he thought it was funny? Who are you to know that he has just used her?

If you were in court your deductions would be laughed at. Leave them alone - don't listen to second-hand gossip, don't think that the Chinese whispers you have heard reflect his feelings, and certainly don't tell anyone who might be hurt by it.

Toby Butler
Hampton Court
Surrey

Just be a good friend

The role of a best friend, in offering insight into a new guy, changes as the relationship develops. If he fails to ring at an early stage, there are so many possible reasons, ranging from the lack of interest that you suspect in this man, to the genuine affection but reluctance to start a new relationship that might be seen in a decent bloke who's just emerged from another relationship.

At this initial stage, your friend would gain nothing from being told the brutal truth of the former, when a gentler letter would be to believe the latter. Obviously, if your friend dates this guy for some time and he's behaving like a rat, then you would be bound through loyalty to tell her what you suspect about him.

I'm always slightly suspicious of "best friends" who

seem to take great glee in telling you how indifferent a guy is; it stinks of envy and spite. Are you sure you're not feeling slightly piqued at being usurped in her affections by this new guy?

In any case, even if your motives are pure protectiveness, you can't believe everything you hear; lad by definition lad about with their laddy mates, and it may be that this guy really does like your friend, but has been boasting. I would keep quiet for the moment, but if the phone remains silent, be there with a box of tissues, a bottle of wine and a copy of *Bridget Jones's Diary*.

Leyla Sanai
Glasgow

Don't make judgements
No - absolutely not; you would be making judgements about the actions of two consenting adults, and you would be confusing in hearsay. Even if the conversation between the two men has been repeated verbatim, it may in itself have been an exaggeration.

Allow free access of communication between the two parties. Your friendship will best be served by lending an ear when asked.

M Leishman
London W4

Your role is to be a support
No, no - please don't tell her. But listen with interest and pleasure to her dreams - perhaps with a casual "Well, I may be a bit early to make plans.

You might go off him..." Then, if it all falls apart, as you fear, she can turn to you, her best friend, for support and commiseration that "he wasn't worth it", and, "you'll find a much better fellow who'll see what a lovely girl you are", etc.

What she wants is your friendship at this time - not a kick in the teeth.

Katherine Whittle
Bolton
Lancashire

Iris's friend must take the consequences of her actions I think adults are better off when they take responsibility for their own lives.

I know this can be hard, it can lead to learning and growth.

One difficulty is that Iris cannot be sure of the facts. Hearsay can be misleading, and confuse the issue. On an adult level, I think that Iris needs to take a step back and not get involved (unless invited by her friend).

If Iris's information is correct, her best friend has a shock in store. However, it was her friend's choice to do what she did, and her decision to react the way she has. Iris's friend will be stronger for bearing the full consequences of her own actions, painful though they may be.

Iris, as a best friend, can be there as a true source of support.

Nicholas E Gough,
Swindon
Wiltshire

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You'll think this a trivial problem, but last week I had beautiful long hair and I went to the hairdresser asking for a trim and he persuaded me to have it all cut off in a new, short style. Since then I have been beside myself with unhappi-

ness. I cry every time I look in the mirror. People say it will grow again, but it could take months or even years. I can't bear the idea of wearing a wig. I just don't look like me any more. But I can't understand why I am so depressed. I

have even felt suicidal, though I would never go ahead with it.

Sara

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Promises, promises ... but Labour had better keep the big ones



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Labour's manifesto was clear: "Smoking is the greatest single cause of preventable illness and premature death in the UK. We will therefore ban tobacco advertising." We goes that most familiar political cry: U-turn!

The Government's decision to allow cigarette advertising to continue in Formula One motor racing is a significant moment. It is Labour's first broken manifesto promise, and that matters more than it might because of the fuss that Tony Blair made about the Conservatives breaking their pledges, and how Labour's manifesto was a "bond of trust", his own "contract with the people".

This has come into conflict with another part of the creed: the determination not to promise what cannot be delivered. It turns out that not all the wrinkles and rough places encountered in Government had been foreseen in opposition.

Not only was the ban on tobacco advertising wrong in principle, as a form of

gesture politics, and an illiberal one at that, it was foolish to have been so absolute about it. Journalists pointed out to Frank Dobson that Formula One races might simply move out of the European Union and yet be broadcast within it, but he stuck to the manifesto line. He wasn't to know that the Prime Minister was busy sawing a circle around his feet, but when he found out, the least he could have done was go on the *Today* programme himself rather than sending a junior minister to sound silly on his behalf. The one thing that Tessa Jowell was obviously not authorised to say was what she should have said: we made a mistake - a total ban is not as straightforward as we thought.

So far, so symbolic and so (relatively) unimportant. What matters is whether the recent spate of claims of broken pledges befores anything more serious about the nature and style of this government.

As a service to our readers, then, here are those U-turns in full: keeping some

tobacco advertising; banning gays in the military; and taxing pension funds. It is a short list, and two of them were not ruled out in the manifesto. What is more, there was nothing on the ban on homosexuals in the armed forces in the manifesto, and Jack Straw puzzled those liberals who thought Labour had "got its betrayal in early" by suddenly declaring in March this year: "The ban is unfair and it will go." His present stance, of wasting taxpayers' money to fight doomed cases defending the ban in European courts, is equally baffling.

Nor was Gordon Brown's £5bn-a-year tax on pensions funds ruled out by the manifesto, which promised to "review" the corporate tax regime to see how it could "promote greater long-term investment". But it flies in the face of Mr Blair's repeated assurance during the election campaign that he had "no plans at all" to raise taxes. He is saved (a) by the complexity and remoteness of the change, and (b) by the fact that it is entirely sensible.

The Government has been accused of other U-turns which cannot be added to the charge sheet. Something deep and strange is going on beneath the Private Member's Bill to ban fox-hunting, but Mr Blair never did promise Government time in the House of Commons. Nor should be have done, although he has sent enough contradictory signals ... "refuse a whole pack of hounds."

And it was this newspaper which broke the news that Labour had renege on a pledge to stop the testing of cosmetics on animals. But, as we report today, the Government has now been shamed into securing a voluntary agreement to end such tests.

Other minor U-turns have been alleged by pressure groups seizing on the tone of opposition rhetoric rather than the letter of Labour promises. Harriet Harman criticised "Tory meanness", but did not promise to take the wind-chill factor into account in cold weather payments for pen-

sions. Jack Straw doesn't like child jails or private prisons, but he never said he wouldn't have more of them. Frank Dobson attacked secret Tory plans to bring in water meters, but he never said Labour didn't harbour them too.

What is much more important than any of Labour's broken promises or disappointed expectations to date is whether or not the Government delivers on the central planks of its manifesto. Mr Blair's five key pledges have all collided with reality. The Government won't even start trying to cut infant class sizes until next year, and it is still not obvious how it will be done. The same applies to faster sentencing for young offenders. But the really tough one is going to be cutting NHS waiting lists; since the election, they have risen.

Let the boy racers decorate their dangerous toys with cigarette ads. If Mr Dobson can get waiting lists down, Labour's bond of trust with the people might survive.

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Fox-hunting

Sir: Over and above the issue of bunting with hounds, I find myself astonished today by the attitude of the Government towards a Private Member's Bill. Are these things mere courtesy moments to allow backbenchers to play-act at legislating, or do they exist in their own right as ways to extend in a democratic way the opportunities to create legislation? I'm confused.

If it is possible for the Government to say, "put that away now chaps, there's good boys" as seems to be the case where Michael Foster's Bill is concerned, then why do we have Private Members' Bills at all? To add insult to injury, this Bill is supported by 70 to 80 per cent of the general population, many of whom voted for Labour because of its pre-election stance regarding various animal welfare issues.

By what right does the Government so arrogantly deny extra parliamentary time to turn into law what most of the country wants, and which the opinion poll to be conducted on the floor of the House of Commons on 28 November will endorse?

VALERIE PAYNTER
Hove, East Sussex

Sir: Most people, so you report, want to see hunting banned. Probably they think it cruel. Most people, however, are unconcerned about the unnecessary cruelty involved in the raising of the eggs, bacon, chicken drumsticks and suchlike which they consume in large quantities. Ergo, really all of us are colossal hypocrites.

Like, say, trainspotting, fox hunting may have a corrupting tendency. Inevitably it is a fairly exclusive sport, which fosters suspicion. However, almost all the literature on sale in my local petrol station is undoubtedly of a corrupting nature. The difference is that such rubbish is the daily mental intake of the majority of people, and therefore all right.

People must have the right to read what they want. Equally I suggest people should have the right to indulge in the rural occupation of their choice, be it bunting, shooting, fishing, golf, horse-racing or pumpkin raising; so long as the essence of the pleasure does not lie in deliberate cruelty (as in badger-



baiting or boxing) and reasonable property rights are not infringed.

Am I alone in deplored the modern tendency of wanting to ban anything one dislikes?

HENRY BEST
Somerset

Sir: The articles in *The Independent* of Tuesday 4 November regarding the attempt to pass a Bill to ban fox-hunting shows the lack of democracy that exists in Britain today.

Hopefully the Prime Minister does have important legislation to pass in this five-year parliament, but the fact that a few, unelected members of the House of Lords, can prevent a Bill being passed which is supported by the majority of the Commons, and the majority of the electorate, shows how undemocratic our current Parliament is. It is time to change our anachronistic upper chamber.

NEIL MURRAY
Gravesend, Kent

Louise Woodward

Sir: Why does no one seem to have considered that Matthew Eappen could have been unwittingly harmed by his brother? Two minutes can be too long to leave a baby alone with a jealous two-year-old sibling - let alone two hours.

NICKY WESSON
Middlesex

Sir: I am as stunned as many others at the conviction of Louise Woodward for second degree murder for killing baby Matthew Eappen.

Many years ago I was a juror on a Crown Court case, and was appointed jury foreperson. During our deliberations, I advised my fellow jurors that if there was any doubt we could only justly and equitably return a verdict of not guilty. A not guilty verdict was given.

Sunit and Debbie Eappen were very naive young professionals who expected higher standards from the au pair

than they themselves were able or willing to provide.

Louise Woodward was young and inexperienced, being paid a paltry sum of money by a couple who could surely have paid much more, and yet she was expected to show the maturity and temperament of a Mary Poppins.

As a juror, I would have needed to be convinced beyond all shadow of doubt that the Eappons were no way responsible if only in a contributory way for the death of their child.

I shall pray and hope that true American justice will prevail and that this unfortunate verdict can be overturned or at the very least be reduced to a verdict which is humane and equitable.

COLIN F DUNCAN
Coulton, Surrey

Sir: Now that Princess Diana is no longer available to the tabloid press in this country as a touchy-feely icon of largely

hysterical emotions, are we to expect a series of scenarios like that constructed around Louise Woodward, in which anyone perceived in the newsroom to be a candidate for hapless victim is picked out for special treatment, regardless of any facts which might spoil the story?

The new style of journalism suggests that rational thought be suspended while we all concentrate on the irrational question of whether Louise Woodward is a better dresser than Mrs Eappen; or preposterously, as on the BBC at lunch time today, that she is just poorer (and thus bound to lose).

When all the rhetoric is stripped away we are left with the uncomfortable fact that Woodward was found with a dead baby supposedly in her tender care. If, as seems likely, she is finally convicted of manslaughter, she should serve her term and her supporters

should shut up. Can any of us imagine the furore the British press would make if this had been an American girl found guilty of the same crime here, who had the same attempt been made to rubbish our justice system? If American due process has a fault, it is that it is too open, lending itself to the danger, as here, that we are all invited to vote, not on the facts, but on the late-20th-century equivalent of thumbs up or thumbs down from our modern Nero (or should that be Caligula?), the television, radio and newspaper pundit.

TIM MADGE
Chesham, Buckinghamshire

Sir: Your article "Stop button for music cassettes" (3 November) shows the danger of perpetuating misleading and inaccurate information.

EMI are keen to retain the audio-cassette until a high-

quality digital alternative has been established. All our newly recorded mainstream rock and pop releases are made available on cassette, as are many catalogue albums. Specifically, the Beatles' *White Album* is still available on cassette, as are at least two recordings of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*.

The story in fact refers to record retailers who of course make their own decisions on the stock range they offer their customers. Music lovers should not be content with what they see on the dealers' shelves. They should ask - and they may be surprised by the answer.

DAVID HUGHES,
EMI Records Group UK
& Ireland, London W6

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DAVID HUGHES,
EMI Records Group UK
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Sir: Dinah Hall has missed the major factor regarding the disengagement many mothers feel at Penelope Leach's wisdom. I finally threw away my

London SE4

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23/COMMENT

THE INDEPENDENT
THURSDAY
6 NOVEMBER 1997PENNY
FRIDAY
BER 1997**Saddle up, Tony, and join the Hezza cavalry**

**POLLY
TOYNBEE
WINNING THE
VOTE FOR EMU**

The EMU battle lines are drawn. The territory to be conquered in just four years is the support of the people. Now we know where everyone stands, the public campaign must begin, but so far there have been only muffled mutterings from the Government.

The voters stand at two-to-one against EMU. Euro-scepticism is deep-dyed in the Union flag, soaked in it through the past 18 years of sceptic government, saturated by a passionately anti-European press. Sir James Goldsmith's deadly legacy of £20m spent on filling the air with Euro-phobia had its inevitable effect, with that powerful £2m video through every door in the country.

Yet on the face of things, the EMU campaign should be a straight re-run of 1975, when exactly the same proportion of voters started out against joining, but swung two-to-one in favour. All the big beasts are on one side: the Government, Asdowen, Clarke, Heseltine et al. The CBI and the TUC speak with one voice. A few brave captains of industry are starting to jump up on to the parapet, waving the EMU troops on. The wise and far-sighted are beginning to present a formidable array. How could they lose?

Who's afraid of William Hague, Peter Lilley, Tony Benn, Sir Stanley Kalms or Norman Tebbit? There should be no contest here. But this raggle-taggle army has a nuclear armoury of weapons, whose exact capability we do not know, but rightly fear.

The sceptic weapon is Rupert Murdoch, who alone controls 41 per cent of newspaper readership, with Conrad Black and *The Daily Mail* standing shoulder-to-shoulder with him, all rabidly anti-European. Can the good guys win against their might?

The muted, strangled noises on Europe emanating from Downing Street so far spring from fear of the damage that Murdoch can inflict. But in the end the Labour leaders will have to stand up to him on this, because they have no choice.

So far, the Prime Minister has backed away from a showdown, because he thinks he can lasso Murdoch and bring him in gently on the end of a rope. He reasons that if public opinion swings behind the single currency, if the clouds of Europhobia are swept back and almost every sensible big player in the nation thinks we must join, and join soon, Murdoch wouldn't want his newspapers left stranded out among the mavericks. He always trims his views to suit his business interests in the end.

But the question is, can public opinion be changed unless the Prime Minister starts to use his government's huge public popularity to win the argument? Can we ever reach the stage where Murdoch's papers are

forced to change their line unless Blair comes out fighting first? Until now, Labour has never wanted to test the state of our democracy, to see whether the government or *The Sun* rules.

But the time is short and the campaign to win public opinion has no real leader until the Prime Minister gets on his horse to do battle with the pugnacious, little Englishmen and cynical manipulators of gut xenophobia. So far, only timid noises come from his camp.

Too late and too grudging, Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, has at least made joining EMU official policy, liberating the Labour Euro-enthusiasts to campaign vigorously. But the message that emerged from Tuesday's Lib-Lab constitutional committee promising to advocate the merits of Europe was a tepid rallying-cry: "The Government and the Liberal Democrats have a shared interest in making Britain less Eurosceptical". Less Eurosceptical? That is hardly the stuff to set hearts and minds afire. We wait for a strong lead, but Downing Street says the Prime Minister has no plans to make a speech on Europe at present.

No, so far, the Conservative rebels have the beau rôle in all this. The Clarke-Hezza/Curry cavalry is charging in from the wing, sabres flashing. They look brave and honourable championing the national interest above party and popularity. The more gallant they seem, the more hesitant and pusillanimous Downing Street appears. Tony Blair hasn't saddled up, and his posse are anxiously looking at their watches. He is letting others fight his battle, bopping them with it for him.

The European Movement, the nascent pro-EMU referendum campaign, is about to announce a new heavyweight team of leaders from each party. Now they need support, a mass membership, local groups and most of all money - a lot of it - to undo the years of damage.

It won't be enough to rely on frightening voters with the dangers of being left out of the single currency. Nor will it be enough to sell the immediate advantages - lower interest rates, lower mortgages, exchange rate stability, and the like. The campaign needs to generate a new warmth for the European idea. It must mark the end, once and for all, to Britain's recalcitrant, bad-tempered, sourly obstructive behaviour in Europe, shifting the attitude of the people as well as the habits of our politicians. This must be Armageddon for Europhobia.

We all rightly criticise the EU as presently constructed, for its democratic deficit, the CAP and myriad other faults. But none of that should stop a wholehearted pro-European campaign, for none of that can influence one jot by us unless we are at the heart of Europe. "A fresh start in Europe, with the credibility to achieve reform," promised Labour's manifesto. Just so. "We will give Britain leadership in Europe," it said. But when, if not now?

It is easy to understand the unease with which the Government risks gambling its huge popularity on such an unpopular cause. But there is no choice. The next election will be fought on this issue, willy-nilly. Dragging their heels will not make it go away, so they had better come out of their tents now with all the panache of the Tory rebels. With a bit of bravery, they can see off the enemy - and at the same time show Rupert Murdoch that the battle can be won without him and despite him, because in the end Tony Blair rules. OK, and it will be Tony Blair. Wot Woo It.

'Chicago' is ... an uncomfortable night out for a newspaper editor

**JOHN
WALSH**

At a preview showing of *Chicago*, the deeply wonderful new musical in the Strand, I sat next to Max Hastings. The 9ft-tall editor of the *Evening Standard* was the tallest lupin among a whole garden of variegated celebrities (Sir Cliff Richard, Anthony Samson, Ned Sherrin) at this rollicking, son-of-Cabaret extravaganza.

It was a very hot ticket and a very cool evening. The upstairs crush bar was full of groovily dressed-down young men swigging Czech beer and smoking Black Russians. The audience was a-buzz with expectation before the show, and alive with whistles and cries of "Yeahhh!" after each sassy number. A lady of mature years couldn't take the strain and fainted at the end of Row G while Ruthie Henshall was singing "Roxie"...

Through it all, Mr Hastings sat with his raincoat on his lap and on his face the expression of an Easter Island statue in the rain. Evidently he is not a fan of the Broadway musical, or the convention that you are allowed to clap before the final curtain. But just as he was (I gathered) resigning himself to terminal crumbl, things on stage took a more interesting turn.

The book of the musical offers an amoral look at the celebrity value of murder, adultery and *crime passionnel*, and how you can be sure of getting a light sentence (or none at all) if you pay the beat attorney, screw the cop and do whatever the dyksh matron of the remand centre requires of you.

Sorry to return to the hoary subject of Booker Prize Night a whole three weeks after the event, but the story of the Indian Car Fight is too good to miss. Picture the scene. Puppy



RUTHIE HENSHALL UTE LEMPER HENRY GOODMAN NELLIE FARREN
PREVIEWS 20 OCT OPENS 10 NOV NEW BROADWAY CAST RECORDING ON ACE VICTOR
ADELPHI THEATRE STRAND, LONDON WC2

Hart what she should tell the Press when they arrive. "Oh, don't worry", says Billy, "because the woman from the *Evening Star* will be here". Beside me, I could swear, Mr Hastings stiffened perceptibly. You'll be fine with her, explains Billy, she's called Mary Sunshine, and she believes everything she's told.

I stole a sidelong glance. The editor of the as-it-were *Evening Star*'s nostrils were dilated. Was he running through a swift mental Rolodex to see which of his charges could possibly fit this description? Then on came Mary Sunshine, a huge lady, possibly *en travesti* in a long sweeping coat, to sing "A Little Bit of Good (In Everyone)". It was, I think, the only moment in any Broadway musical in which a character is required to embody journalistic gullibility. And the bitch had to work for the *Evening Star*... Mr Hastings shifted in his seat and dredged his ear with an exasperated forefinger.

Sorry to return to the hoary subject of Booker Prize Night a whole three weeks after the event, but the story of the Indian Car Fight is too good to miss. Picture the scene. Puppy

ish, bespectacled former publisher David Godwin, a literary agent of few years' experience but a talent-spotter of quality, has two of his charges, Arundhati (*God of Small Things*) Roy and Jim (*Quarantine*) Crace, on the Booker shortlist, and both tipped by Ladbrokes and William Hill to win. The occasion obviously warrants a special gesture. So he hires a white stretch limousine for the evening. If either Roy or Crace gets the prize, they will be whisked off to the Winner's Party with Godwin in this transport of ecstasy, handily furnished with flowers, champagne, TV, and, for all I know, en suite micro-wave and shower unit.

In due course, Arundhati Roy is announced as the winner. Loud huzzahs at David Godwin's table. As Ms Roy is interviewed by the nation's press, Godwin checks that the limo has arrived outside the Guildhall's main entrance. But there is a problem. I can't park there, reports the driver, there is a bloody great big black motor outside the main entrance already. Appalled, Godwin tries to get it moved. The driver won't budge. Whose car is it? The driver won't give the name; he'll only say it's a mysterious Top

Celebrity, who's attending the dinner with an entourage...

Godwin puts two and two together and stamps off into the Guildhall, where he confronts the Top Celebrity, waiting for his date to emerge from the Ladies. "Could you please," he demands, "remove your car from the front door?" Why? asks Salman Rushdie (for it is he). "Because Arundhati Roy's limo is supposed to be parked there," Godwin explains. Rushdie is unimpressed. An argument ensues as to whose car is bigger, whose reputation is more starry, whose credentials as Top Literary Indian Booker Laureate are more convincing.

Some versions of the story end with Godwin and Rushdie exchanging blows on the Guildhall forecourt. Others suggest that Godwin sent a note of apology to Rushdie the next morning. Others bring up Mr Rushdie's lack of enthusiasm for the chase, writing in 370BC or so, newly translated by Robin Waterfield for Penguin Classics, and demonstrating that hunting is even more old-fashioned (or more respectably pedigree, depending on your point of view) than you thought. Shame the Greeks didn't have a word for "Yoicks!"

No, Algeria, it's not an 'internal affair'

**ROBERT FISK
THE CASE FOR
INTERVENTION**

the Algerian ambassador to London made a similar remark. "The 'disappeared' have in fact, in most cases, joined the terrorist gangs," he wrote.

But they are Algerians. The villagers, the "disappeared", the FIS, the armed gangs, the guilty and the innocent. They are Algerians. They are part of the same great nation which fought with such endurance and bravery against French rule.

But that, I said, is Israel's excuse - indeed, the very same appalling reason given by the Israeli government to endorse Israel's "shaking" torture of Palestinians: that such methods may be necessary to save lives (albeit that a thousand Palestinians have now been "shaken" for very few lives saved).

My Algerian friend had no reply to this. He merely pointed out that we Europeans had no right to lecture Algeria about morality. And, up to a point, I had some sympathy with him.

Take France. The Jospin government isn't above lecturing Algeria on human rights. But in the 1954-62 war, the French massacred tens of thousands of Algerian civilians. In 1961, the Paris police force - under the command of Maurice Papon - massacred hundreds of Algerians by trussing them up and throwing them into the Seine. Of course, the

Algerians were fighting and killing Frenchmen in their battle for independence. But one reason the French loathed - and I suspect in many cases still hate - the Algerians is because Algerians are not a backward, ignorant people. They are intelligent - far too intelligent for most Frenchmen to tolerate.

The Francophone veterans who fought the French read Camus and Molière. Tragically though their circumstances have since become Algerians are a quick-witted, bright, discerning people. They deserve better than to be lectured to by us.

But And it's a big but. It is time that the Algerian government stopped shrugging off foreign intervention as "interference in the internal affairs of Algeria". It is time that human rights groups were welcomed into Algeria. It is time for Algerian ministers to open their arms to the UN when its representatives offer help - not snub them, as the Algerians did to Mary Robinson. The revelations by lawyers and former security force personnel in *The Independent* last week that thousands of Algerians have been "disappeared" and that torture is now routine in police stations cry out for an international response. Even

General Muhamed Lamari, the armed forces chief of staff, admitted last week that "some excesses may have taken place on the part of individuals acting alone" - far short of the reality, perhaps, but a remarkable statement, all the same.

I can understand the anger of Algerians faced with a shrill and moralistic audience of Europeans and Americans. I can understand the anger of the Algerian ambassador to London, even if some of his statements were factually incorrect. To say that *The Independent* did not deem "victims of terrorism" in Algeria worthy of our front page - when page 1 of our edition of 22 October was taken over entirely by the story of massacre survivors - was to put mildly, being economic with the truth.

But Algeria needs our help. The *eradicateurs* in the government have signally failed to eradicate anything, while President Zeroual talks of "residual terrorism". General Lamari is warning of a long struggle ahead. And to what end? When an FIS leader appeals to the UN, he is slapped back into house arrest. When Europeans convened a peace conference in Italy - in which the FIS and opposition groups appealed for dialogue - it was dismissed out of band by the Algerian government.

Soon - very soon - the West is going to have to link the purchase of Algerian oil and gas exports to human rights improvements. The sale of military equipment - Italian pistols, American flak jackets and tear gas, German police vehicles - will have to be granted only after independent investigation of human rights.

In Algeria, we are now told that the Denel company of South Africa plans to sell military helicopters to Algeria for use by the army in anti-guerrilla operations. Does President Mandela approve of this?

In the Middle East, the Europeans were asked to fund the now-dead Israeli-Palestinian "peace process" but ordered by the United States to keep their mouths shut. In Algeria, we are asked to provide the arms and buy the gas - and are again expected to keep our mouths shut. But why should we? One of the great nations of the world - the 18th oil exporter, the 7th gas exporter - is suffering 25 per cent unemployment and 47 per cent illiteracy, and is tearing itself apart on the edge of Europe. Its unity is in danger. And it is no longer an "internal affair".

**Arthritis
Respects Nobody.****My body, Your body,
John's body**

John is one of over 11 million men, women and children in Britain today who know just how painful arthritis and rheumatism can be.

The Arthritis and Rheumatism Council is the only major UK charity financing medical research into all aspects of arthritis and rheumatic disease in Britain today.

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YOUNG OR OLD - THE PAIN'S THE SAME

Tanks and car group Vickers 'facing hostile break-up bid'

Vickers, the Challenger tanks to Rolls-Royce cars group, was last night facing the prospect of an audacious reverse takeover bid by Mayflower, an engineering business less than two-thirds its size. Chris Godsmark and Michael Harrison examine a move which could scupper Vickers' plans to sell off its luxury car business.

Vickers' management, led by Sir Colin Chandler, chairman, first heard rumours of Mayflower's intentions on Monday and asked the High Wycombe-based company to issue a denial. In a Stock Exchange statement last night Vickers said Mayflower was planning a "hostile" bid for the company.

It continued: "Mayflower has not given Vickers appropriate assurances that this information is without foundation. As a result, Vickers is announcing the existence of these plans both to the interests of its shareholders and in order to avoid the development of a false market in its shares."

A short while later Mayflower, which has designed a new body panel making plant for Rolls-Royce, confirmed that it was examining a possible approach. The company said: "Mayflower already has a close relationship with Rolls-Royce. In the light of the above, the board of Mayflower is considering all its options, which may, or may not, include an offer for Vickers."

Shares in Vickers jumped

20.5p on the news, to 248p, adding £70m to its stock market value, which rose to £240m. At the same time Mayflower's share price dropped 15p to 189.5p, valuing the company at £478m.

Vickers was last night preparing a possible bid defence, hinting that Mayflower was unlikely to be able to finance a takeover. The company said it was "not clear" whether Mayflower, which has gearing of some 60 per cent, would be in a position to make an offer. The statement went on: "But should it do so, it would be considered on its merits."

A Mayflower spokesman refused to comment further, though it was thought the company, founded and led by John Simpson, chief executive, would decide by the end of this week whether to launch a full-scale bid. The group, which is being advised by BZW, is apparently eyeing an offer including some Mayflower shares, though the bulk would be in cash.

If it makes an offer, Mayflower would cancel the sale of Rolls-Royce, announced less than a fortnight ago, and instead sell-off Vickers' defence business, the UK's largest armoured vehicle maker, which produces the Challenger tank. Mayflower has recently invested £22m in its car panel business, which makes entire bodies for Rover, for its MG Rover, and for the Aston Martin DB7. It also supplies Land Rover Discovery body panels.

It would be a U-turn for Vickers, which has been in talks to buy GKN's armoured vehicle business for a price thought to be between £50m and £100m. Vickers has argued that it cannot afford to invest in a new, smaller Rolls-Royce, having already paid £200m for the

replacement for its existing car, due early next year.

Should the bid go ahead and succeed, one potential buyer of the Vickers tank business would be Alvis, the UK armoured vehicle manufacturer best known for the Scorpion and Stormer armoured tracked vehicles. Nicholas Press, the Alvis chairman, said last night, however, that it had not been involved in any way with Mayflower or consulted on any break-up plans Mayflower had for Vickers should a bid materialise.

Nevertheless, it is thought that Alvis would be bound to register an interest if the tanks division did come off the market. Defence industry observers were sceptical, though, about whether the bid would succeed, pointing to the premium Mayflower would have to pay.

Alvis paid £90m in September for the Swedish armoured vehicle group Hagglund in a deal which catapults it on to a par with both Vickers and GKN, maker of the Warrior armoured track vehicle, in terms of military production.

Apart from Rolls-Royce, Mayflower would also retain Vickers' growing marine engines business, which makes propulsion systems for the new generation of fast ferries.

Mayflower has grown rapidly since 1989 out of the "shell" of the former Triangle toy company. Through share issues and acquisitions, its sales have soared from £27m in 1991 to £202m in 1995.

The possible bid for Vickers follows a setback for Mr Simpson last year. His £172m bid to buy a US car suspension maker was trumped by a much larger American rival. Mayflower recently revealed a 58 per cent rise in half-yearly profits, to £16m.

Outlook, page 25

Scottish Telecom offers Racial a partnership

ScottishPower is hatching plans to expand its telephone business south of the border, with an offer to turn Racial's telecommunications operations around.

But as Chris Godsmark, Business Correspondent, reports, the multi-utility is not prepared to launch a full-scale bid to buy the Racial division.

The approach to Sir Ernest Harrison, Racial's chairman, would form part of an ambitious plan to give Scottish Telecom, ScottishPower's telephone business, a bigger footprint in the English and Welsh phone market. Racial has appointed Merrill Lynch, the US investment bank, to seek partners or a buyer for Racial Telecom and two offers are now known to have been made by the deadline for expressions of interest, which expired last month.

They present Racial with the choice of a firm buyer, in the form of Duncan Lewis, the former head of Mercury and senior Granada executive, pitted against ScottishPower, which is seeking a partnership without paying cash for a direct shareholding. Mr Lewis, backed by Schroder Ventures, is thought to be offering around £400m to buy the whole of Racial Telecom.

Scottish Telecom has built up a long-distance network in Scotland by running telephone lines along its electricity wires in the same way as National Grid's Energen operation. Since May it has expanded into the residential market in Edinburgh, using fixed wireless technology similar to Iomica, with 7,750 customers connected by the end of September.

Ian Russell, ScottishPower finance director and chairman of

Scottish Telecom, has set a target of capturing 10 per cent of the £2bn Scottish telephone market by 2000. The pace of growth at Scottish Telecom has surprised the industry. It is poised to earn revenues of around £110m this year and, unlike Energen, is making a profit.

A partnership with Racial would give Scottish Telecom access to a long-distance network across the UK and lucrative contracts to supply telecommunications services to Government departments. Racial Telecom expanded in 1995 with a £130m takeover of BRT, the old British Rail telephones business which runs wires alongside railway tracks.

However the cost of a full-scale takeover of Racial Telecom has apparently been ruled out by ScottishPower, which is still digesting its £1.7bn purchase of Southern Water last year. The multi-utility group, which announced its results yesterday, had debts of £1.7bn at the end of September, boosted by an additional £171m windfall tax provision.

Profits before exceptional charges in the six months rose by 44 per cent, to £240m, helped by the contribution from Southern Water. Including the windfall tax, ScottishPower revealed losses after tax of £133.6m, the first since privatisation.

Meanwhile ScottishPower yesterday pledged to unveil two more marketing alliances for its domestic gas business on top of a recent link-up with the Automobile Association. The new alliances were also likely to be with affinity groups like the AA, though ScottishPower declined to give details.

The company said it had signed up 55,000 domestic gas customers in Scotland since competition began last weekend, a much lower figure than the 200,000 claimed by Eastern Group, despite ScottishPower's stronger brand identity.

Whitbread looks at German openings

Whitbread is considering expanding some of its hotel and leisure formats into continental Europe. The budget-priced Travel Inn hotel concept and the David Lloyd Leisure centres are the most likely candidates, with Germany the favoured market. Nigel Cope, City Correspondent, reports.

David Thomas, Whitbread's chief executive, said the group was "looking hard" at whether the two formats could be transferred to Germany. Whitbread already has some restaurant outlets there and analysts said Travel Inn hotels could be operated alongside them. The David Lloyd centres, which feature tennis courts, swimming pools and gyms, would benefit from a relative lack of

competition in the German market, analysts said. However, the company conceded it may have to change the name of the tennis centres. "Perhaps it should be Boris Becker centres," joked Alan Perlman, finance director.

Mr Thomas said the idea was in its early stages and that high costs may prove a deterrent. "The consumer appeal in Germany for these two brands is high but it is a case of whether they can actually make a return for our shareholders. Land and labour costs in Europe are higher."

Analysts said the expansion into Germany would make sense as Whitbread already operates three branded restaurant chains, Maredo, Tascaia, Maredo and Churrasco there. However, they cautioned that Whitbread's previous overseas forays, with Pizza Hut in France and other formats in America and Australia, had not been conspicuously successful.

Mr Thomas said that the

group's recent acquisitions - Marriott Hotels, David Lloyd Leisure and Costa Coffee - were all earnings enhancing in the six months to September and that their performances were ahead of budget.

Whitbread is on track to create 6,000 jobs this year as part

of its new opening programme. It is opening a hotel every 10 days and a restaurant every four days. The plan is to spend £450m in the full year opening 250 new outlets. These will be spread across the group's formats, which include Brewers Fayre and Hogshead pubs and the Café Rouge and Dôme restaurants. The next 18 months will also see a further nine David Lloyd Leisure centres open, taking the total to 27.

The announcement came as Whitbread announced an 11.6 per cent increase in first-half pre-exceptional profits to £198m. Profits in the beer division improved 13 per cent with beer volumes up 2.4 per cent in a falling market. The

company said the priority was to focus pubs on food, families and females, which were the key to rising consumer appeal.

Though 1,000 pubs a year are closing, Whitbread said these were largely unbranded community pubs with poor food offers.

In the Inn business, food and drink margins rose despite competitive pressures. In hotels, operating profits rose by 21 per cent to £19.5m. The

Marriott hotels improved occupancy to 92 per cent in London and 77 per cent elsewhere. Whitbread's group sales were 8.4 per cent ahead at £1.6bn. The shares rose 11p to 80p.

In the bars, food and drink margins rose despite competitive pressures. In hotels, operating profits rose by 21 per cent to £19.5m. The

Marriott hotels improved occupancy to 92 per cent in London and 77 per cent elsewhere. Whitbread's group sales were 8.4 per cent ahead at £1.6bn. The shares rose 11p to 80p.

Separately, Nomura International has sold 845 unbranded pubs to Grovebase Properties, a new company formed by Hugh Osman, an executive director of PizzaExpress. The pubs were part of the 1,720 pubs sold to Nomura in the Phoenix Inns deal for £249m at the beginning of 1995.

IT company to create 2,000 jobs

One of Britain's biggest information technology groups moved yesterday to plug the skills gap in the computer industry by offering to create up to 2,000 jobs, writes Sameena Ahmad.

Telephones to CRT, Britain's largest information technology recruiter, were jammed yesterday as a flood of people from fork-lift truck drivers to policemen clamoured to join an innovative programme to create 2,000 new IT jobs in the UK in the next five years.

The scheme, launched yesterday and costing £70m, is an attempt to solve the critical shortage of skilled computer staff in the UK. Around 50,000 new people are needed in the industry by 2000 to meet de-

mands driven by the millennium problem, monetary union and booming growth of IT in business. CRT's programme, which is targeting women and people over 40 in particular, invites anyone to apply, even those who have never used a computer before, promising applicants who pass a series of tests and a three-month training probation period a permanent, full-time job and annual salary of up to £40,000.

Though the scheme, called Career IT, has yet to be advertised, CRT received 600 telephone calls yesterday asking for application forms. A handful have already returned their forms on email. Karl Chapman, CRT's chief executive, said he was "staggered" by the response. "The only places people will have heard about this is at 5.50am on Radio 5 and just after 6am on BBC Radio Scotland. That's hardly peak lis-

tening time. We are absolutely delighted. Tomorrow is going to be very busy."

Mr Chapman said he was looking for people who were "bubbly" and with the right attitude, not necessarily with experience. "Personality is what is wanted plus a logical mind. In IT, only 30 per cent of the spend is on hardware. The rest is on people."

He said the number of women in IT was "ridiculously low" and he would advertise the scheme in women's magazines. The staff shortages, he added, were partly a result of the industry's "geeky" image for anoraks".

Richard Holway, the respected IT consultant and author of the industry bible, *The Holway Report*, said: "I think it's absolutely novel. CRT has opened training to people who've got aptitude rather than the expected educational qual-

ifications and that is to be commended. Anything that people can do to solve this desperate problem is welcome."

However Mr Holway warned that CRT's proposals would do little to solve the current skill shortage: "I personally believe there is not much anyone can do to solve this. The problem is acute. The main demand is the year 2000 and these people won't be ready in time."

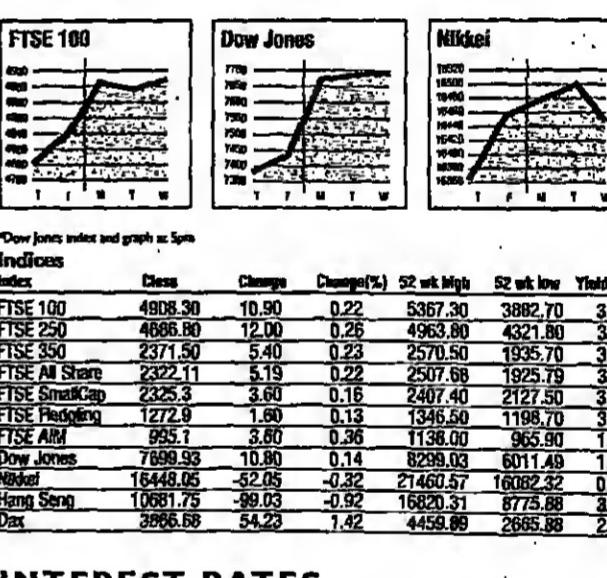
Several in the industry are exploring novel ways to recruit extra IT staff. ICL, the computing group, this week wrote to 350 retired staff who are experts in Cobol, the old computer language which is the cause of the year 2000 crisis, asking them to return. Logica, which had a profits warning because it could not recruit people fast enough, opened a walk-in careers centre in London to attract new staff.

Anglo United to reform itself as Falkland Islands Holdings

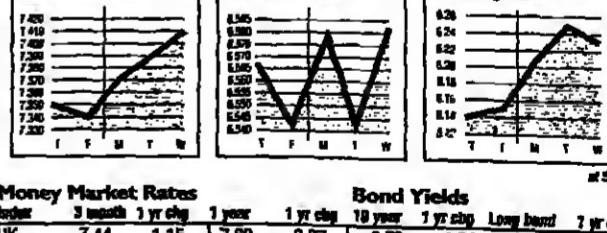
The new company will own Coalite and the Falkland Islands companies. But it will be able to sell all the old businesses except Coalite to Middlebright, a company owned by two of Anglo's directors, John Gainharr and Roger Wallace. According to Anglo, Middlebright's shares are likely to have no value because of Anglo's old debts.

When the new company lists, Collins Stewart, the stockbrokers firm, will reduce the bank's stake to 40 per cent by placing 2.1 million shares at 100p each.

STOCK MARKETS



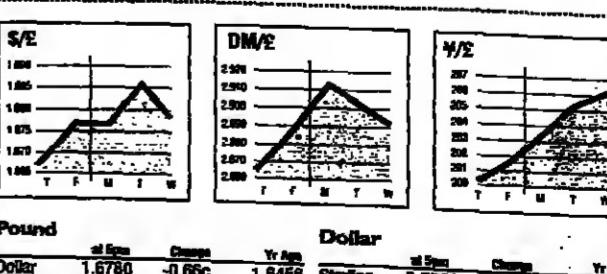
INTEREST RATES



MAIN PRICE CHANGES

	Price (d)	Change	% Change	Falls	Price (d)	Change	% Change	Rises
Schroders PLC-NV	1829.00	18.00	1.00	14.10	279.00	-9.00	-3.1%	31.80
Pembina Group	101.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	332.00	-10.00	-2.9%	321.00
Schroders PLC	1800.00	175.00	10.00	10.77	568.00	-17.00	-2.9%	551.00
Booker PLC	315.00	26.50	9.19	9.19	864.5	-26.5	-2.6%	838.00

CURRENCIES





OUTLOOK ON AN IMPLAUSIBLE BID. OVERSEAS AID AND TOBACCO SPONSORSHIP

Mayflower's bid for Vickers is full of holes

It's not quite: "I loved the Roller so much I bought the company," but it's not far from it. Mayflower bidding for Vickers would have seemed inconceivable only a couple of years ago when the car body maker was barely a quarter the size of the Challenger tank and Rolls-Royce cars group. Now they are almost the same size, it is merely implausible.

All the same, it is not hard to see why Mayflower should have swung into action after Vickers announced last week it was selling its luxury car subsidiary. The company has carved out a lucrative niche designing and building car bodies and its profits are flourishing. The potential loss of its Rolls-Royce account to a rival with better connections in Munich would have dealt it a severe blow - what more certain way of securing the business than by buying it?

That's the thrust of the commercial argument. For the gist of the financial case look no further than the recent share price performance of the two companies. Since the beginning of 1993, Mayflower's share price has risen more than 10-fold as it has cashed in on the trend among car manufacturers to outsource the design of their ever more diverse ranges. Vickers' shares are worth about the same as they were 10 years ago when Sir Ron Brierley was trying to break the group up.

Look any closer than this, however, and the holes start to appear. First, cash. It would be optimistic to assume Vickers' shareholders would accept anything less than a 30 per cent premium to the company's present market value of around

£800m. A bid of £1.1bn would probably entail doubling the number of Mayflower shares in issue even before the assumption of over £500m of debt. It would be wrong to assume that the planned disposal of the defence arm into a buyers' market would make much of a dent in those borrowings.

Having never spent more than £100m on an acquisition, it is hard to believe Mayflower is really up to the possible £500m cost of developing the next generation of Rolls-Royce cars. Vickers itself took one look at that hill and hoisted the for-sale sign - what hope Mayflower? But just in case Mayflower is serious, Vickers has cleverly pre-empted its designs, by getting this out into the market place before Mayflower was ready to go. That makes Mayflower's chances of success even more remote.

Clare Short's crusade on aid

Tricky stuff, overseas aid. Always has been and by the look of yesterday's White Paper on international development - *Ensuring World Poverty: A Challenge for the 21st Century* - it seems destined to remain that way. In many respects this is a terrific document, filled with passion, moral indignation and a genuine, crusading approach to the cause of world improvement. In other words, there is quite a lot of Clare Short herself in this worthy and sometimes breathless tome. But does it advance the

underlying case for overseas aid by very much? It's arguable either way.

Right-wing hard liners have long insisted that overseas aid is not only a waste of taxpayers' money but most of the time is also a positively bad thing, discouraging enterprise in the developing world, encouraging unsustainable financial policies, propping up corrupt and dictatorial regimes, polluting the environment and generally doing a lot more harm than good. The evidence to support this view is legion. But it is not so overwhelming as to win the argument outright.

Furthermore, the Government's White Paper makes no attempt to defend the past record of overseas aid. Rather the reverse. It is strongly critical of aid for the purpose of geo-political influence and it commits the Government to abandoning the aid for trade policies of the past - ie we help finance a public works project and you place the orders with our companies. Both approaches it rightly condemns as economically flawed and politically incorrect.

Although the alleviation of poverty has always been the implicit policy goal of overseas aid, this has not always been apparent in the way aid is allocated. Ms Short tries to make it explicit. Sustainable development and livelihoods for the world's poor becomes the whole purpose of aid.

Few people are going to quarrel with the vaguely political pre-conditions she does introduce, such as the Government's commitment to human rights and environmentally friendly development. Priority is also to be given in the allocation of aid "to the value of maintaining a sound fiscal

balance and low inflation". Though Ms Short probably had to be shoo-horned into including this stipulation, again this is pretty uncontroversial stuff, even for the left.

The document is also refreshingly honest in the way it makes its case for aid.

There is no serious attempt to justify the giving of aid as economically valuable to Britain, except in so far as a richer world creates better trade opportunities. Rather, the purpose of aid is a moral one, to make us feel better about ourselves and to establish Britain as a world leader in compassion. Unfortunately, this may not be enough to persuade Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, to double Ms Short's overseas aid budget, for that is what she is after.

Formula One's addiction

The Health Secretary Frank Dobson's plan to ban all tobacco sponsorship of sporting events looks spookily like turning into Labour's equivalent of the Dangerous Dogs Act. Like all proposals dreamt up on the hoof and announced without sufficient thought, it now seems to be unravelling again.

To many, Formula One racing looks like little more than a giant billboard for the tobacco industry. Unless you go to Grand Prix circuits to watch the crashes, it is impossible to avoid the ubiquitous advertising of the weed. It is on everything, from the race teams and their cars to the overalls and the track side hoardings. Like sec-

ondary smoking, it permeates everywhere.

Unfortunately, it has now fallen to Mr Dobson's junior minister, Tessa Jowell, to recognise that there is very little that can be done to stop this, either at a national or European level.

Ban tobacco sponsorship and it is bye-bye to Silverstone and the British Grand Prix and perhaps also the UK's pole position as home to most of the big constructors. But since motor racing is the quintessential international sport, it will simply relocate elsewhere and then continue to beam the pictures back into our living rooms from the safety of Asia or Europe.

Ms Jowell proposes instead that Formula One be exempted from a proposed European Union directive banning nearly all forms of tobacco sponsorship in return for an undertaking in principle from the sport to make its tobacco advertising less visible.

It is easy to see why the sport's governing body, the FIA, is keen on the idea, since a blanket European ban could begin to hurt its image and income. It is also easy to see why the idea has smacked out the opposition in the shape of Action on Smoking and Health and possibly, the EU commissioner responsible for the directive, Padraig Flynn. Harder to see is why a UK-brokered compromise should turn the on-off flotation of F1 into a guaranteed success. Bernie Ecclestone still has much bigger fires to put out, starting with the tiresome refusal of Williams and two other leading teams to sign up to a deal for dividing up the all-important television income.

Service sector data at odds with slowdown

Despite weaker-than-expected industrial production in September, renewed buoyancy in the service sector has put pressure on the Bank of England's policy-makers to increase interest rates. Tom Stevenson, Financial Editor, reports on the latest batch of statistics.

Further evidence of Britain's two-speed economy emerged yesterday after the September data for both industrial and manufacturing production were weaker than expected but October numbers for the service sector rose to their highest level since July.

Economists said that because the service sector was three times bigger than the manufacturing side of the economy and because it had been the main driving force of GDP growth this year, any further acceleration in services would have to be met by higher interest rates.

The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee concludes its monthly meeting today and is expected to leave interest rates unchanged. Some economists believe, however, that the apparent slowing in the economy might simply be a pause before growth resumes and they expect at least another quarter-point rise in base rates from the current 7 per cent before the cycle peaks.

According to the latest survey of members of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (Cips), all measures of business activity - new business, outstanding work, prices and input costs - rose in October. The survey showed recruitment difficulties were putting upward pressure on

wages in some sectors. Strong competition means those higher costs are not being passed on to consumers, which is keeping a lid on service sector inflation. But the MPC is expected to be concerned about the upward pressure on wages.

Peter Thomson, director general of Cips, said: "The service sector economy has picked up since the weaker growth over the summer, though expansion is not as strong as it was in the first six months of the year. Skill shortages continue to drive up costs by pushing up salaries, but the outlook for inflation remains favourable."

According to Kevin Dartington, economist at Hoare Govett, there has been a worrying extension of tightness in the labour market from skilled jobs to low-skilled vacancies. He believes the figures show a slowdown in service industries is not imminent.

Industrial production fell by 0.2 per cent in September

thanks largely to erratic oil and utilities output. Oil and gas production fell by 1.6 per cent while electricity and water supply industries fell by 2.4 per cent.

Even so, the underlying picture

for the predominant manufac-

turing sector was disappointing.

The rise in September for manufacturing was only 0.2 per cent. It failed to make up for the fall in August, which was revised down from 0.1 per cent to 0.3 per cent. As a result, the year-on-year growth in manufacturing was only 1.5 per cent.

According to Jonathan

Loynes, economist at HSBC Markets, however, manufac-

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"With today's purchasing man-

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ther to rise before reaching a peak."



Adair Turner: 'I would like the Tories to say they have an open mind on issues to do with Europe' Photograph: PA

Business may force early EMU entry

The Confederation of British Industry yesterday predicted that *de facto* adoption of the euro by many large businesses would increase the pressure for early UK entry into a European single currency after the 1999 launch date.

Speaking in the run-up to the CBI's annual conference next week, which is certain to be dominated by the twin themes of Europe and monetary union, Adair Turner, director general, predicted that many companies would bill and invoice in euros.

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The euro will put British

companies at a degree of competitive disadvantage and over time that will generate increasing demand for entry, not just from big multi-nationals but medium-sized exporters becoming increasingly vocal about the disadvantages they are exposed to."

Several large companies, including Marks and Spencer, have decided to accept the euro at their tills when notes and coins start circulating in 2002 and others such as BP are considering switching their accounts to the euro.

Mr Turner also took a side swipe at the Tory leadership under William Hague, which has ruled out participation in a single currency after 10 years. Criticising the Conservatives' stance, he said: "I would like to see them have an open mind on issues to do with Europe, particularly EMU, that they are going to listen to business opinion on that issue and that they are going to play the role of a constructive and pragmatic opposition."

He refused to be drawn, however, on whether the Tory split on EMU, with heavyweights such as Kenneth Clarke and Michael Heseltine coming out for early entry, presaged a schism in the party to rank alongside the realignment of politics on the left in the early 1980s with the creation of the SDP. "That is interesting speculation for others to go through," he said.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, will address the CBI conference in Birmingham on Monday and will be followed by Mr Hague. The Prime Minister, Tony Blair, will bring the proceedings to a climax with a live video link on Tuesday. He had been scheduled to speak on education but has changed his theme to Europe to reinforce the message that Labour has inherited the mantle of the party for others to go through," he said.

The conference will also see the launch of a debate about labour market flexibility across Europe, in itself one of the key factors on which the success of monetary union will turn. The CBI is warning that without greater flexibility in labour markets, the benefits of EMU will be diluted.

There have been moves towards freeing up labour mar-

kets in areas such as flexible skills. But there has been much less movement in the contentious areas of wage flexibility and demanding. In France, Italy and even the Netherlands, there is only very limited scope for firms to adjust employee levels to suit competitive conditions without incurring heavy costs and in some member states it remains illegal or impossible to achieve without lengthy consultation periods.

Mr Turner said that although conditions on the Continent were often compared unfavourably to the open labour markets of Britain and the US, the situation was not as bad as imagined. Germany had introduced a degree of decentralised wage bargaining, the Dutch allowed greater flexibility in working hours and in Italy there had been a degree of loosening with government support for the abolition of earnings indexation.

However, the CBI cautioned that it was important not to adopt a "one size fits all" approach to labour flexibility across all countries.

- Michael Harrison

Microsoft 'poised to invest \$1bn' in US West cable

Speculation is mounting that Microsoft, the world's largest software company, is on the verge of buying a substantial stake in US West's cable operations. Reports in the US press said that Microsoft was poised to invest \$1bn (£600m) to buy around 6 per cent of the company's cable business. US West is a local phone monopoly based in Colorado.

Only a few weeks ago, rumours were circulating in the US that Microsoft would buy a stake in Tele-Communications Inc (TCI). Both TCI and US West are major shareholders in Telewest Communications, the UK's second

fourth-largest cable television operator in the US. Microsoft said at the time that the deal would enhance the delivery of high-speed data and video services. It also marked Microsoft's growing interest in positioning itself as a content provider capable of controlling access to the internet and digital television.

The company recently acquired WebTV Networks for \$425m, which allowed it to cash in on the public appetite for PCTVs - units which combine personal computers with television sets.

Last month, Microsoft's chief financial officer, Greg Maffei, said his company was talk-

ing to a number of cable operators. "We're investing in things that will help us further our strategy," he said.

For the year to the end of June, Microsoft announced revenues of \$11.36bn, a 31 per cent increase year-on-year.

US West announced last week that it would split into two public companies in the middle of next year. The two groups will be US West Communications, the telephone business, and MediaOne Group, the third-largest cable television operator in the US.

- Cathy Newman

Thames Water rejects £400m bid

Thames Water has received a £400m takeover offer from Generale des Eaux for its portfolio of non-regulated businesses. Though Thames has rejected the approach, it could raise the prospect of further bids for the business, as Chris Godsmark, Business Correspondent, reports.

The surprise move by General des Eaux, the French utility giant, demonstrates the turnaround in the fortunes of Thames' non-regulated businesses since they were last year forced to write off £95m after a series of costly overseas divisions.

Generale des Eaux, which owns two passenger train franchises in the South-east of England and four smaller drinking water companies, approached Thames earlier this year with an offer, understood to be worth £400m in cash, for all of its non-regulated companies. Generale des Eaux has been one of the most aggressive companies in bids for overseas water contracts, with markets opening up across Asia and South America as state utilities seek private finance to repair decades of underinvestment.

Since the restructuring last year, Thames has exited from foreign infrastructure contracting operations, preferring to concentrate on bids to operate water and sewerage schemes.

Thames' international operations were given a strong boost this summer with a huge long-term contract to supply the eastern half of the Indonesian capital, Jakarta, with drinking water.

In China, the first phase of a project to supply water to 2 million people in Shanghai has been completed.

NEW INVESTMENT RATES

Effective from 6 November 1997

ANNUAL RATES	GROSS % p.a.</th

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY SAMEENA AHMAD

Boring old Whitbread

With the pub sector suffering a hangover, Whitbread's predictably boring results were a tonic. The big brewers have been out of favour recently following warnings from both Greenalls and Wolverhampton & Dudley. The fear was that with the huge sums being poured into developing managed pubs, returns would suffer. Whitbread's share price was dragged down too with the shares tumbling from 850p in July to less than 700p a week or two ago. But they have been recovering recently. Yesterday's half-year results served to further reassure that the company is on track.

Underlying pre-tax profits in the half year to August rose 12 per cent to £188m. The figures pushed the shares 11p higher to 801p. Though Whitbread hinted yesterday that it may expand some of its hotel and leisure brands on the Continent, what the market really wants to see are improvements on the return on its existing portfolio. This has been expanded significantly in the last few years by buying David Lloyd Leisure, Pelican restaurants and Marriott Hotels.

Encouragingly, Whitbread pointed out that it has invested £440m in new pub and restaurant openings in the last three years and that the annualised return on capital in 1997/98 was expected to be 16 per cent.

In beer, Whitbread has bucked the trend, improving volumes by 2.4 per cent in a market down 0.8 per cent. In sectors such as take-home, brands like Stella Artois have increased sales by 28 per cent.

If there is a potential problem in the Whitbread portfolio it may be Café Rouge. Though it is being expanded successfully outside London, like-for-like growth is just 1 per cent and the central London outlets are suffering from increasing competition.

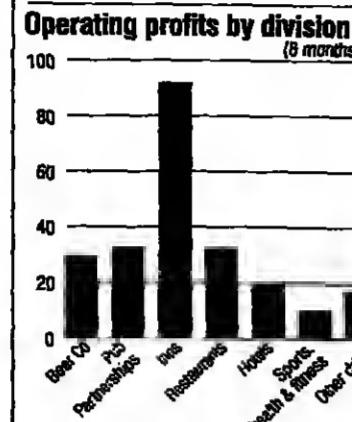
But with the hotels business storming away with strong rises in occupancy and yields, it is hard to find much to grumble about. On SBC Warburg's full-year forecasts of £348m, the shares trade on a prospective multiple of less than

Whitbread : At a glance

Market value: £3.92bn, share price 801p (+11p)

	1995	1996	1997	96/97	97/98
Turnover (£bn)	2.47	2.75	3.03	1.50	1.63
Pre-tax profits (£m)	275.4	285.7	302.5	128.1	138.0
Earnings per share (p)	42.76	46.08	50.84	27.23	32.86
Dividends per share (p)	20.2	21.85	22.0	8.25	9.88

Operating profits by division (£m)



15. That is a discount to the market and as a defensive stock looks a safe haven in these volatile markets. Hold.

Tough future for ScottishPower

Executives from ScottishPower, like other multi-utilities, should chant the following mantra in the bathroom mirror every morning: "Doing deals is easy; reaping rewards in the long term is the difficult hit." A quick glance behind ScottishPower's impressive looking 44 per cent rise in interim profits, to £240m, shows the problem.

Against this ScottishPower has done more than most to grow its non-regulated businesses. The telecoms arm is making profits - a big achievement against its industry peers. The company insists its domestic gas business is also profitable, but it faces a stern test next year when British Gas cuts its prices by 9 per cent and wades into the electricity market.

From now on the going can only get tougher. Though the group's shares firmed 2.5p to 439.5p, investors cannot expect the miracles to continue forever.

Rag and bone boost for Shanks

After years in the dumps, Britain's waste management sector is starting to look worth digging into. Long overdue consolidation is finally happening. In August General Utilities took out Leigh Interests for £116m and South West Water has bought Southern Water's waste business for £11m. Waste disposal prices are starting to rise. With fixed overheads, this is boosting profits. And increasingly stringent legislation is working in the big boys' favour.

The landfill tax introduced last year is prompting companies to use specialised disposal methods which only the big players can provide. Though recycling prices have been falling, European legislation early next year will make recycling of everything from paper to steel a legal requirement.

Shanks & McEwan, the UK's second-biggest waste group, should benefit from all this. Michael Averill, chief executive at Shanks, which yesterday posted underlying profits up 10 per cent to £67.6m for the half year to September, believes recycling will be a massive market. With no real competition, the group has scope to grow its recycling business, currently loss-making. With gearing at 19 per cent and some 3,000 small private waste groups in the UK, Shanks is poised to make acquisitions.

Meanwhile, Shanks is the only UK group with a contract to incinerate meat and bone meal from slaughtered cows at risk of BSE. Shanks' contract is to process 45,000 tonnes in the next three years. But with 300,000 tonnes mountain of pulped cow building up, there is more work if Labour is prepared to pay. Shanks' share price, down 2.5p to 148.5p, is creeping back after hitting almost 240p in the early 1990s. On a forward p/e of 17 times, decent value, particularly given the bid whiff in the air.

Strike and sterling cost BA £250m

accounting functions to India and redundancy programmes - would produce £600m savings.

The remaining £400m would come from efficiency improvements, re-organisation of flight schedules and driving down supplier costs. The extra savings, he added, were not contingent upon BA launching a low-cost, no-frills airline to compete with carriers like Ryanair, Debonair and easyJet.

The City reacted positively, marking BA shares up by 27p to 603p. The strike and exchange rate losses were also offset by £157m of exceptional profits from the sale of BA's stake in USAirways and part of its holding in the Galileo reservations system, which left first-half profits down 8.5 per cent at £430m.

Mr Ayling said BA did not expect a decision from Brussels until early next year on whether its alliance with American Airlines would be approved. BA brushed aside reports yesterday that the Commission would block the deal unless the two airlines came up with a pack-

age in the next couple of weeks setting out the number of take-off and landing slots they are prepared to surrender.

However, it has emerged that BA executives and officials from the Competition Commissioner Karel van Miert's division will meet next week to discuss slots. Brussels has said it wants BA and American to give up 350 slots but a compromise, based on them relinquishing 200-250 slots, is thought to be possible.

Sir Michael Bishop, chairman of British Midland, the country's second-biggest scheduled carrier, meanwhile disclosed that profits this year would show a "significant improvement" on the £7.2m achieved in 1996.

Sir Michael also sounded a warning note over the BA-AA alliance, and the open-skies deal that would follow if it is approved. Although it would lead to the "fairs war to end all fairs wars" across the Atlantic, it could also turn Heathrow into a "bucket and spade airport for North America".

Powerhouse keen to expand

Powerhouse, the electrical retail group which was a management buyout from Hanson last year, is likely to hit the acquisition trail soon as it seeks to expand its store portfolio.

Glyn Moser, the company's chief executive, also said the company was considering a stock market flotation though there were no immediate plans.

Mr Moser is interested in acquiring some of the Shoe City out-of-town stores from Sears, the struggling retail group.

Powerhouse is keen to add to its 36 superstores but says its 83 high street outlets are also per-

forming well. With net cash of £17.2m, the company has the firepower to acquire a whole business rather than just individual sites.

Mr Moser was speaking as Powerhouse reported a pre-tax profit of £1.7m on sales up 8 per cent at £67m for the six months to September. The company had been losing £25m-£30m a year when it was acquired from Hanson in June last year.

Mr Moser said summer sales were boosted by the windfall money. But the company said this money was fast disappearing.

- Nigel Cope

Credit agencies 'breaking the law' over relatives

Credit reference agencies may be breaking the law because they hold financial information on the relatives of people who apply for mortgages and other credit, according to Which? The consumer magazine says the main credit reference agencies, Equifax and Experian, hold information on any relatives who have shared a home with a customer who applies for credit. Other people on the applicant's record who pay bills late can cause customers to be turned down for a mortgage or other loan. Which? said agencies were holding data on relatives at any previous address where the law only allows data on the last previous address. The magazine, which is tied to the Consumers' Association, retrieved 113 files from the agencies. Of these, eight contained information which is, according to the researchers, illegal. Serious mistakes were contained in a further nine people's files, with one showing a woman owing £1,637 when she had repaid this debt years before. In a separate survey of 8,000 people, the magazine found none of the big four banks - Lloyds TSB, Midland, NatWest and Barclays - were rated above average for their service. Yet they retain two-thirds of the country's customers.

Seagram profits advance

Seagram said yesterday that its first-quarter profit rose 4 per cent on improved performance by its drinks and music businesses. Net income in the quarter to the end of September rose to \$133m (£79m), or 37 cents a share, from \$127m in the same period a year before. The summer blockbuster, *The Lost World: Jurassic Park*, made a strong contribution, and profit at Seagram's global spirits and wine business rose to \$191m from \$182m.

Oftel raps telephone groups

WorldCom, the US telecoms group; Global One, the international consortium; and two UK telephone groups were reprimanded yesterday for not giving UK customers enough information about the quality of their services. Don Cruickshank, director-general of UK telecoms watchdog, Oftel, said the companies had failed voluntarily to publish performance tables of service standards, which would allow customers to choose between them. He warned this raised the likelihood of a European Union directive to enforce full competition. Mr Cruickshank especially criticised Britain's Colt Telecom Group, the Eurocell cable company, WorldCom and Global One, the partnership between Sprint, Deutsche Telekom and France Telecom. Most telecoms groups in Britain publish service performance on issues such as fault repairs, bill accuracy and complaint handling every six months. WorldCom said it would provide the information from 1 January 1998.

C&W to run multimedia first

Cable & Wireless has been given the go-ahead to operate what it said would be the world's first fully interactive multimedia service in Hong Kong before the end of the year. The Hong Kong operation will give customers access to video-on-demand services, music channels and home shopping.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
British Airways (I)	4.8bn (4.4bn)	430m (470m)	31p (39.7p)	4.7p (4.25p)
L. Gruher (F)	35.3m (22m)	4.4m (2.5m)	21.3p (15.6p)	7.0p (6.00)
Hawker (F)	32.8m (28m)	2.1m (728,000)	8.55p (2.48p)	2.25p (0.85p)
Raglan Properties (I)	-1.1	3.4m (1.01m)	1.5p (0.44p)	n/a
Scottish Power (I)	1.4bn (1.3bn)	240m (197m)	-11.3p (12.28p)	6.8p (6.17p)
Stansfield & MacKenzie (I)	88.3m (61.4m)	12.7m (11.6m)	4.3p (3.9p)	1.4p (1.3p)
Whitbread (I)	1.6bn (1.6bn)	198.1m (177.5m)	31.12p (27.1p)	8.82p (6.25p)
(F) Final (I) Interim				

and new shares are being issued to raise £194m to repay Bovis debts to its former parent. The new public company will be debt-free.

Bovis ranks 12th in the UK league of house-builders, selling 2,456 homes at an average price of £90,100 last year and making an operating profit of £24.4m on a turnover of £267m. Profit before tax was £23.3m.

Mr Harris said the company's best strength was its policy of combining a range of facades and finishes with a handful of basic designs and using standardised components.

It has a landbank of 8,398 sites with planning permission, enough to last for almost three-and-a-half years at last year's building rates, plus options on a further 13,400 sites. In the six months to the end of June it sold 1,097 homes at an average cost of £95,100 and made an operating profit of £14.3m on a turnover of £111m, pushing up the profit margin yet again to 13.1 per cent.

Only three UK house-builders, Redrow, Wilson Bowden and Berkeley, did better.

In South-east England Bovis margins reached 17.4 per cent last year.

- Clifford German

Diabetic tests boost Cortecs

Good test results from a new drug for diabetics sent shares in Cortecs International, the Anglo-Australian biotechnology company, soaring by 15 per cent to close at 203.5p after hitting 235p at one stage yesterday.

The company said trials for its experimental drug, Macrulin, showed "very encouraging" results which "present the real possibility of improving therapy for diabetics". The trials involved six diabetic patients.

Patients taking oral capsules containing Macrulin experienced a decline in their blood sugar levels, Cortecs said. The trial has not been completed yet, but results are due later in the year.

However, some analysts said it was too early to say how meaningful the results were.

Andrew Baum, an analyst with Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, said: "I am enormously sceptical of oral insulin. The precise doses required to regulate a patient's blood sugar vary, making the window for an effective dose very small."

Insulin is a naturally occurring hormone needed to process blood sugar into energy.

Diabetics are either insensitive to the hormone, or have insufficient quantities of it.

CLASSIFIED

Public Notices

OPRAF RAILWAYS ACT 1993

PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE RAILWAY PASSENGER SERVICES

The Franchising Director gives notice under Sections 38 and 41 of the Railways Act 1993 that, after due consideration, on or after 24 May 1998 Central Trains Limited proposes to withdraw passenger services from and terminate the use of the following stations and route for passenger services:

SINFIN CENTRAL

SINFIN NORTH

THE ROUTE FROM MELBOURNE JUNCTION (NEAR PEARTREE STATION) TO SINFIN (DERBYSHIRE)

Objections to the proposed withdrawal of services and/or closure of the station, preferably in writing, may be lodged within six weeks of 13 November 1997, i.e. by 8th January 1998 with:-

Ms Teresa Perchard, Passenger Services Group, Office of the Rail Regulator, 1 Waterhouse Square, 138-142 Holborn, London EC1N 2ST Telephone: 0181 645625 (all calls charged at local rate)

Fax: 0171 282 2043

Euro will shake up the Continent more than the UK. Myth or fact?



DIANE COYLE
ON WHY
BRITAIN
MUST STAY
IN THE RACE

Many myths achieve the status of hallowed facts when they have been repeated often enough, and few are more hallowed than those concerning national economic performance.

Take the notion that there are two distinct varieties of capitalism – the market-loving, equity-financed Anglo-Saxon variety and the corporatist, bank-financed RhineLand version. It's a neat contrast. But it isn't true in at least one key respect. German and French companies do not, as a group, finance their investment through loans from supportive banks keen to establish a long-term relationship with them. Nor do US and UK companies in the aggregate raise funds for investment from the stock market. Indeed, British firms raise more net finance than German ones via bank debt.

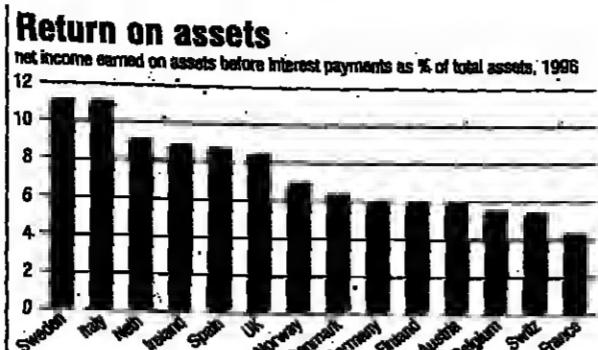
On the other hand, there are tremendous national differences in how well companies perform in terms of profitability or return on capital: those short-termist Anglo-Saxons do significantly better than the Germans or Japanese. Investment in Britain has been far more worthwhile for at least the past six years. This in turn explains the much bigger stock

market gains in the US and UK over that period, even if the listed companies do not actually raise much of their net finance from issuing equities.

These facts – the real ones, as opposed to the myths – are presented in a fascinating paper written for Merrill Lynch by David Miles, Professor of Economics at Imperial College, London. They raise the prospect that the big adjustment to the single currency when Britain eventually joins will have to be made, not by a laggardly UK economy, but by badly performing German and French companies. And, if there is an adjustment, it could give a big one-off boost to the continental stock markets.

Back to the figures first of all. Measured by market capitalisation, the UK makes up a higher proportion of the value of Europe's top 500 companies than any other country, with 31 per cent. By balance-sheet value of assets, it has 22 per cent, just ahead of Germany and France. Drugs companies, banks, utilities, insurers and oil and gas producers are among the biggest companies. So it is groups such as Glaxo Wellcome and BP, SmithKline Beecham and BT, along with two Anglo-Dutch companies, Shell and Unilever, that make up the biggest elements of Britain's corporate might.

Looking at the corporate sector as a whole in each country, there is no evidence of any significant difference in how net new finance for investment is raised. German companies actually have the lowest share of debt to market capitalisation in Europe, and it is not significantly different from gearing in the UK, according to the statistical tests. Germany's big corporate bond market, which dwarfs the UK's, consists 99 per cent of asset-backed securities issued by banks. Bonds and bank loans are an insignificant source of funds outside the financial sector.



The reason the differences in equity versus bond financing turn out to be insignificant is that in all countries the corporate sector uses internal funds, retained profits, to fund investment. Internal finance is hugely dominant. In the aggregate, funds raised externally are matched more or less by the acquisition of financial assets, although some individual companies raise external funds and different companies acquire the assets. These flows are what is measured by the bond and equity markets and the banks.

So, over the years 1970-94, bank finance accounted for 11.9 per cent of the net funds raised by Germany's corporate sector, just higher than the 11.1 per cent in the US, but lower than the 14.6 per cent in the UK. Japanese firms did raise more this way, at 27.6 per cent of total net finance. Both corporate Germany and Japan raise small amounts via equities, but corporate Britain and America repaid share capital to a small extent. German firms made net repayments of corporate bonds. Only in the US did net bond financing amount to anything noticeable, at 15.4 per cent of the total – presumably thanks to the junk bond era. The patterns have altered slightly in the 1990s. British companies have raised net equity financing and seen a fall in the share of funds internally generated. Bond financing has dropped off in the US, and bank

financing in Japan, with the slack taken up by internal funds. But the overall picture remains a reality conforming not at all to stereotype.

If countries are alike in how they raise own finance, mainly by retaining profits, they differ in the use to which they put that capital. Professor Miles finds that on any measure of performance the RhineLand capitalists are the dullards. Whether measured by earnings yield or return on assets, British companies have performed best since 1991, along with the Dutch, Irish and Swedish corporate sectors. Germany, France, Belgium and Austria have competed for position place. The return on assets in the UK, at 8.23 per cent from 1991-96, was more than twice France's 4.03 per cent, and much better too than Germany's 5.84 per cent. The difference might well reflect industrial structure, with Britain having more companies in the best-performing sectors such as utilities, retailing, leisure and drugs, and fewer in weaker performers such as cars and aerospace. If true, this explanation sheds an interesting light on the sale to foreigners of the British car industry.

What does this myth-demolition imply for the future? The launch of the single currency is likely to trigger some significant restructuring, and the assumption has always been that because Britain is so different from the continental economies,

Britain would have to adjust most. But it might be that the introduction of the euro, and a genuine single market, delivers more of a jolt to France and Germany. For example, the powerful home-country bias in equity investment by the big institutions will diminish, and funds will make allocations based on sector or company comparisons but not on a national basis. The pressure will be for the worse-performing companies to buck up their act. The German and French and Belgian corporate sectors might tend to become more profitable.

According to the paper, there will be a separate and enormous boost to the German stock market. At present, company pension funds are heavily invested in their own company, but they will increasingly diversify to invest in other companies. It makes no sense for workers' pensions to be mainly invested in the company for which they work, putting all their financial eggs in the one basket.

The idea of portfolio diversification is likely to catch on generally with continental funds. German companies will therefore lose an internal source of funds and will have to fill the gap externally, which could represent a huge boost to the stock market.

Thirdly, transaction costs in Europe's stock markets will probably converge on the cheapest – London's – under the euro. Other markets could see a fall of 10 to 25 per cent in dealing spreads.

What it all adds up to is a boost for activity and share prices on the continental bourses during the first years of the single currency as the rest of Europe tries to catch up to Britain's secret corporate success. Only a hardened Europhobe would see this as another reason for the UK to stay outside the single currency, though; you can only keep ahead if you stay in the race.

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

LEA PATERSON



Now here's a piece of advice for anyone who is scared of flying – forget all that guff about hypnosis, chattering to the pilot en route or knocking back a couple of stiff drinks before getting on the plane. If you really want to rid yourself of your phobia once and for all, make sure your family has homes scattered all over Europe and then have a go at starting up your own airline company.

Well that was certainly the task chosen by Stelios Haji-Ioannou, son of millionaire Greek shipping magnate Lycias Haji-Ioannou and founder of no-frills airline easyJet. "I was scared of flying when I was a young boy," he told me yesterday. "I think I got it from my mother." But the frequent-flying young Mr Haji-Ioannou soon got over his fears. "I was flying very often," he said, "my family had homes all over Europe."

So what does Mr Haji-Ioannou do when he isn't starting up new easyJet routes – most recently Liverpool-Nice and Liverpool-Amsterdam – or co-ordinating his campaign to lose an internal source of funds and will have to fill the gap externally, which could represent a huge boost to the stock market.

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Congratulations to Richard Kersley and Steve Wright, equity strategists at BZW and now footloose members of the marathon runners club. They both completed the course in New York last weekend, although Mr Kersley gamely admitted it looked tough and go before his wife kicked him round the last six miles or so. No such cajoling was required for Mr Wright, aka action man, who strolled round in under three hours, finishing around 600th out of 30,000.

Both are now limbering up for the possi-

bility more arduous challenge of individual interviews with their new paymasters at Crédit Suisse. It remains to be seen whether Barclays' promise to match the charity fund-raising effort pound for pound (liability, about £2,000) will be assumed by BZW's new owners.

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar	1 month	3 months	Sterling	Dollar	1 month	3 months	Sterling	Dollar	1 month	3 months
Australia	1.0000	1.4261	1.0254	1.0352	0.6720	0.9872	0.6720	0.9872	0.6720	0.9872	0.6720	0.9872
Austria	1.2307	1.2766	1.2361	1.2766	0.8240	1.4220	0.8240	1.4220	0.8240	1.4220	0.8240	1.4220
Austria	2.0352	2.0320	2.0259	2.0258	1.2136	1.2132	1.2136	1.2132	1.2136	1.2132	1.2136	1.2132
Belgium	59.5932	58.6411	58.6060	58.6454	35.4813	35.3868	35.4813	35.3868	35.4813	35.3868	35.4813	35.3868
Canada	2.2465	2.2386	2.2300	2.2386	1.3884	1.3884	1.3884	1.3884	1.3884	1.3884	1.3884	1.3884
Denmark	1.4538	1.4504	1.4533	1.4504	1.1465	1.1489	1.1465	1.1489	1.1465	1.1489	1.1465	1.1489
ECU	1.4538	1.4504	1.4533	1.4504	1.1465	1.1489	1.1465	1.1489	1.1465	1.1489	1.1465	1.1489
Finland	6.6949	6.6920	6.6912	6.6920	5.7570	5.7577	5.7570	5.7577	5.7570	5.7577	5.7570	5.7577
France	6.6920	6.6920	6.6920	6.6920	5.7274	5.7280	5.7274	5.7280	5.7274	5.7280	5.7274	5.7280
Germany	2.2297	2.2297	2.2297	2.2297	1.7725	1.7725	1.7725	1.7725	1.7725	1.7725	1.7725	1.7725
Greece	4.2263	4.0698	4.0698	4.2263	3.6620	3.6620	3.6620	3.6620	3.6620	3.6620	3.6620	3.6620
Hong Kong	12.985	13.013	13.002	12.985	11.7225	11.7225	11.7225	11.7225	11.7225	11.7225	11.7225	11.7225
Ireland	1.1711	1.1712	1.1703	1.1711	1.0507	1.0507	1.0507	1.0507	1.0507	1.0507	1.0507	1.0507
Italy	1.2051	1.2051	1.2051	1.2051	1.2248	1.2248	1.2248	1.2248	1.2248	1.2248	1.2248	1.2248
Japan	2.0551	2.0531	2.0521	2.0551	1.7465	1.7465	1.7465	1.7465	1.7465	1.7465	1.7465	1.7465
Malaysia	5.5249	5.5317	5.5322	5.5249	5.3260	5.3260	5.3260	5.3260	5.3260	5.3260	5.3260	5.3260
Mexico	3.2290	3.2290	3.2290	3.2290	1.0404	1.0336	1.0404	1.0336	1.0404	1.0336	1.0404	1.0336
New Zealand	2.6772	2.6772	2.6772	2.6772	1.0522	1.0522	1.0522	1.0522	1.0522	1.0522	1.0522	1.0522
Norway	1.7177	1.7175	1.7164	1.7177	1.0723	1.0723	1.0723	1.0723	1.0723	1.0723	1.0723	1.0723
Portugal	2.0430	2.0444	2.0436	2.0430	1.5788	1.5788	1.5788	1.5788	1.5788	1.5788	1.5788	1.5788
Saudi Arabia	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240
Spain	2.2282	2.2282	2.2282	2.2282	1.5788	1.5788	1.5788	1.5788	1.5788	1.5788	1.5788	1.5788
Sweden	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240
Switzerland	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240	0.8240
UK	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1								

Moorer the southpaw stance master with clout

Michael Moorer is one of those southpaw fighters the boxing purists love to hate. On Saturday, he steps into the ring for a heavyweight world title unification fight that, as Ken Jones explains from Las Vegas, could mean trouble for Evander Holyfield.

One thing about boxing upon which its professors are generally in agreement is that southpaws deserve the prejudice that has grown up against them.

The breed made nobody more indignant than Henry Cooper's manager, the late Jim Wicks, whose malapropisms are fondly recounted by veteran sports writers. In 1967, shortly before Cooper met Jack Bodell in defence of the British heavyweight championship, Wicks, known commonly as "The Bishop", said: "Bodell and all them other southpaws are deterrent to the fight game."

Although Cooper won in two rounds, the difficulties Wicks imagined were apparent in a second contest when Bodell, a limited fighter of legendary awkwardness, held an ageing Cooper to a decision.

When boxing trainers contemplate the southpaw problem they have often the air of people who have worked long on a single project that has not come out entirely to their satisfaction. This cropped up in a conversation I had with Freddie Roach who is preparing Michael Moorer, the International Boxing Federation heavyweight champion, to fight Evander Holyfield, the World Boxing Association title holder, on Saturday at the Thomas and Mack Center here.

Until Moorer outpointed Holyfield for both belts three years ago, later losing them by knock-out to George Foreman, there had never been a southpaw heavyweight champion. Simply on the basis that they could not be guaranteed regular employment, promising novices who shaped up naturally as "right-handers" were quickly turned around in the gymnasium. Cooper's famous left hook, "Eeny's Answer" as it became to be known, was a development of this process.

The former undisputed middleweight champion Marvin Hagler and Vicente Saldivar, the formidable Mexican who defeated Howard Winstone of Wales three times for the featherweight title, are just two southpaws who have distinguished themselves, but Wicks's ancient prejudice is still expressed in the heavyweight division.

There is a psychological aspect to this, but, as Roach points out, the problem with southpaws is mostly physical. "It's not so much that they lead with the right hand as the foot position," Roach said. "If the orthodox fighter steps inside the



Punching power: Michael Moorer targets the hands of his trainer, Freddie Roach, as he prepares for Saturday's showdown with Evander Holyfield in Las Vegas

Photograph: Reuter

southpaw's right foot he finds himself off balance and in difficulty delivering punches."

Watching Holyfield at work with one of his sparring partners, Jeff Wood, you could see why Roach thinks that the WBA champion may be taking Moorer too lightly. It pleased Roach to hear that they stepped frequently on each other's feet and that Holyfield almost tripped over.

"That's what I am going on

about," Roach said. "It's all right for Evander to say that Michael's stance won't be a factor but it was unquestionably a problem for him in the first contest."

Roach, who worked alongside the famed trainer Eddie Futch for five years, has a lighter touch than the volatile Teddy Atlas, who grew so weary of Moorer's moodiness that he walked away from the \$800,000 (£488,000) that would have been his percentage of the purse money.

As A.J. Liebling put it: "It is often possible to gauge a winning fighter's temperament by his trainer's which will be just the opposite - a process like mirror-reading. A moody fighter, or a worrier does best under an easygoing type, who can make him laugh at himself; the good-tempered fighter needs a martinet to remind him that life is serious."

It is uncertain whether Moorer feels a lot more comfortable with

Roach than he was with Atlas because he continues to put obstacles in the way of communication. Interrogators have to lean in close to catch what he is saying. After training on Tuesday he mumbled satisfaction with the way things are going and glared at a reporter who asked about a the fleshiness in an upper body that compares poorly with Holyfield's sculpted torso. "I'm happy with the way I am and I'm not into bodybuilding," he said.

Happy, too, it seems to have a trainer who is not confrontational. Before Moorer agreed to work with Roach he put some questions to him. Did he mind music in the gym and would he object if associates were present at training sessions, things which led to arguments with Atlas. "It wasn't a problem for me," Roach said. "We all have our ways of doing things, but I'm afraid that Teddy Atlas turned it into his show. Another thing Michael asked was

how I would react if he knocked out sparing partners. I told him to just go ahead and do it."

In Roach's mind that proved Moorer's determination to gain confidence in his punching power. "The trouble is that people keep referring to the Foreman fight," Roach said. "If any heavyweight connects, never mind one as heavy-handed as George, you're in trouble. Anybody who saw the fight couldn't fail to have Michael ahead when George landed the right that finished it. Michael lost because of one lapse in concentration. It's one of the things we have been working on."

"In any case I much prefer Michael to look back on the Holyfield fight because that night he was clearly the better man."

Holyfield appears disdainful of the southpaw problem. "I don't even think about," he said. Holyfield, a deeply religious man, smiled at the suggestion that to discover God is a southpaw would turn him into an atheist. "God is as right-handed as I am," he said.

Dry eyes all round as McCall returns with a victory

Oliver McCall, whose last appearance in the ring was in tears against Lennox Lewis, made a victorious return on Tuesday night with a technical knock-out of journeyman Bryan Yates in the eighth round of their bout in Nashville, Tennessee.

The former World Boxing Council world heavyweight champion stopped Yates after 1min 36sec of the eighth with a series of jabs, af-

ter Yates had lost his mouthpiece following a barrage of uppercuts and hooks to the head.

McCall, who seemed confident

between rounds, despite yells from the crowd of "Crybaby", was suspended and fined \$250,000 (£155,000) for crying in the ring and refusing to fight Lewis in February in Las Vegas. After refusing to go to his corner twice and throwing only

two punches in the fourth round, he was stopped by the referee, Mills Lane, 55 seconds into the fifth.

Another well-known name making a winning return on Tuesday night was Tim Witherspoon, who needed less than two minutes to knock out Levi Billups in his first bout in nearly a year, in Robinsonville, Mississippi.

The 39-year-old Witherspoon,

who is trying to secure a bout for a third heavyweight title, was fighting for the first time since losing a unanimous 10-round decision to Ray Mercer last December.

The Nevada State Athletic Commission has told Mike Tyson that the door is open for his return to boxing, as long as he proves that he is fully rehabilitated. Tyson, suspended from fighting after being dis-

qualified for biting Evander Holyfield's ears, said on Monday that he doubts the Commission will ever let him fight again.

But the Commission chairman, Elias Ghanem, said: "Mike Tyson has to prove to the commission, and the rest of the world, that he has rehabilitated himself. He has to admit to the terrible thing he did that night. He has to make a 180-degree turn."

RUGBY LEAGUE

Atcheson steps up as Crompton goes fishing

Great Britain have dropped three players following their defeat in the first British Gas Test against Australia - and have sacked one missing squad member. Dave Hadfield reports on a day of axe-swinging.

Paul Atcheson and Adrian Morley have been promoted to the British starting line-up for the second Test at Old Trafford on Saturday, but the Test career of Martin Crompton has been ended before it has begun.

The scrum-half signed from

Oldham by Salford has gone missing since being left out against Australia at Wembley and was officially turned out of the squad yesterday.

"We are very, very disappointed with Martin's attitude," the Great Britain team manager, Phil Lowe, said. "If he doesn't want to make himself available for his country, he is better off where he is."

Crompton, bitterly hurt at being left out of the first Test after appearing to be the front-runner for the scrum-half role at one stage, thought to be on a fishing holiday in Scotland.

He missed training sessions on Monday and yesterday and Britain have bowed to the in-

evitable by counting him out of the series.

Some others who were not equally disappointed by their "lookers" roles in the Wembley Test have their reward in the side named yesterday.

Atcheson, Crompton's team-mate at Oldham last season who is now on St Helens' books, played just six minutes in London and starts for Great Britain for the first time. He has, however, played five times for Wales.

Morley, the strapping Leeds second-row, did enough in his substitute appearance at Wembley to persuade Goodway to let him start this match. Two other second-rowers, Simon

Haughton and Mike Forshaw, are in line to make their debuts off the bench. Mick Cassidy is the forward to lose his place, although he says that he is not contemplating a fishing trip to Scotland.

The other man in the Wembley starting line-up to lose his place completely is Anthony Sullivan, the St Helens winger, who failed to display his outstanding domestic form.

With Atcheson coming in as a specialist full-back, Jason Robinson returns to his original position on the right wing, Alan Hume switching to the left in place of Sullivan.

The other changes are the disappearance of the Castleford

prop, Dean Sampson, from the bench and the introduction there of Sean Long, the St Helens half-back.

Andy Farrell remains in the stand-off role that he occupied as an emergency measure at Wembley. The switch of Farrell from his normal loose-forward berth to the problem position behind the scrum was blamed by some commentators for Britain's failure to click at Wembley, but both Goodway and Farrell believe - correctly, in my view - that this is a superficial reading of the match.

GREAT BRITAIN v Australia (Old Trafford, Saturday, 12 November, 1997, 7pm). Referee: Mick Cassidy. Officials: Peter Mellor, Goultong, Broadbent, Lowe, McDermott, Morley, Joyce, Sculthorpe, Subbaratnam, Long, Forshaw, Haughton, Morley.

prop, Dean Sampson, from the bench and the introduction there of Sean Long, the St Helens half-back.

Rick Brebant, the under-pressure Newcastle Cobras coach, yesterday revealed he may not be in charge for tonight's Benson and Hedges Cup semi-final at home to Cardiff Devils.

Brebant is under fire following a disastrous run which has seen the Tyneside club lose

eight of their last 10 games, including all seven opening matches in the Superleague. Cobras have a mountain to climb in the Newcastle Arena against Paul Heavey's Devils after losing the first leg 6-2 in the Icethrone last Saturday.

Brebant sounded as if he was facing the sack yesterday - despite previously pledging he would never walk out. Asked whether he would make a playing comeback and take to the ice to help Cobras out of their crisis, he said: "I don't know what I'm going to be doing any more." Then, asked whether he would be in charge tonight, Brebant replied: "I don't know. I don't want to say anything else. I'm fed up, very fed up."

Newcastle's season has fallen apart after a successful start to their Benson and Hedges campaign, when they won six

and had far too many long days and sleepless nights. My family, my wife and the athletes I coach have suffered."

Arnold expressed satisfaction yesterday over his efforts in shaping to sport's initial application for Lottery funding, which resulted in a £2.6m award.

His likely to work with the four newly appointed technical directors within PAS in shaping the seven-year plan which will be submitted to the Lottery Awards Board at the end of the year.

"I prefer to do one job to 110 per cent rather than five jobs in 20 per cent, which is what I have had to do. I have

had far too many long days and sleepless nights. My family, my wife and the athletes I coach have suffered."

Arnold is immensely influential in his new position," said Roger Eady, performance director for the UK Sports Council. "He has done the right thing in concentrating on his special talents. And he is still in a position to mentor a new generation of coaches in British athletics."

- Mike Rowbottom

ICE HOCKEY

Future looks uncertain for Brebant

Rick Brebant, the under-pressure Newcastle Cobras coach, yesterday revealed he may not be in charge for tonight's Benson and Hedges Cup semi-final at home to Cardiff Devils.

Brebant is under fire following a disastrous run which has seen the Tyneside club lose

eight of their last 10 games, including all seven opening matches in the Superleague. Cobras have a mountain to climb in the Newcastle Arena against Paul Heavey's Devils after losing the first leg 6-2 in the Icethrone last Saturday.

Brebant sounded as if he was facing the sack yesterday - despite previously pledging he would never walk out. Asked whether he would make a playing comeback and take to the ice to help Cobras out of their crisis, he said: "I don't know what I'm going to be doing any more." Then, asked whether he would be in charge tonight, Brebant replied: "I don't know. I don't want to say anything else. I'm fed up, very fed up."

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apart after a successful start to their Benson and Hedges campaign, when they won six

and had far too many long days and sleepless nights. My family, my wife and the athletes I coach have suffered."

Arnold expressed satisfaction

RUGBY UNION

All Blacks ready to take revenge without Lomu

It is almost exactly a quarter of a century

since Llanelli turned over the All Blacks on an emotional afternoon at Stradey Park. As Chris Hewett reports, the current New Zealand tourists have no intention of walking into a similar ambush when they square up to the Scarlets on Saturday.

There is no place for Jonah Lomu, whose All Black career will almost certainly resume against Wales A at Sardis Road next Tuesday. Lomu, stricken by kidney problems and still on medication, must watch Glen Osborne stake a test claim in the No 11 shirt at Stradey.

The Scarlets, meanwhile, will almost certainly be without their own All Black, Frano Botica. The veteran outside-half suffered a shoulder injury during last weekend's Heineken Cup play-off defeat by Cardiff and is likely to give way to Craig Warlow.

Talking of veterans, Will Carling is about to cross the shadow line between playing and pontificating: the former England captain, hardly noted for his love affair with the media during a long stint at the sharp end, will present ITV's coverage of England's internationals this winter.

Fritz van Heerden, the

Springbok utility forward, has finalised his move from Western Province to Leicester. The South African Rugby Football Union has cleared the transfer and waived a 180-day stand-down period but, in the same breath, has made it clear that he will no longer be considered for Test duty.

Sean Fitzpatrick will spearhead a Test-strength front five

and other first-choice men include Josh Kronfeld on the breakaway flank, Justin Marshall at scrum-half and Frank Bunce and Jeff Wilson among the threequarters.

WILL CARLING

FOOTBALL

Adams' merry-go-round halts at Griffin Park

Micky Adams has been appointed manager of the Second Division strugglers Brentford - his third job in six weeks.

Adams, who was released from Fulham when Kevin Keegan took over as chief operating officer. He then became manager of Swansea City - but his spell there lasted only 13 days after arguments over money to players.

Adams, who has been given a three-year contract, has already appointed Glenn Cocksell, a former colleague at Fulham, as his assistant player-manager.

The previous manager, Eddie May, and his assistant, Clive Walker, have been released, while the former manager, David Webb, is standing down as Brentford's chief executive, although he will keep working on a consultancy basis until his contract expires in May.

Villa given fresh impetus

Brian Little's chance to manage Aston Villa arose exactly three years ago after the double whammy of a Uefa Cup exit and a defeat at Selhurst Park ended Ron Atkinson's reign. Coincidence contrived a potential repeat of that scenario this week, but a stirring win over Athletic Bilbao means that Little's team visit Crystal Palace on Saturday with a fresh opportunity to relaunch their season.

How slender is the margin between success and the sack. The odds were under Atkinson after Villa beat Trabzonspor 2-1 only to go out on away goals. This time, an identical scoreline saw them into the last 16 by the narrowest of margins, ensuring a Premiership presence alongside the likes of Ajax, Atletico Madrid and Internazionale in tomorrow's third-round draw.

Gullit ready to lead Chelsea into next century

Ruud Gullit is ready to sign a new contract to stay as Chelsea manager well into the 21st century - provided chairman Ken Bates can prove the club has a success plan for the next 10 years.

"I haven't signed yet but we are talking about it all the time," Gullit said. "It is not anything to do with money. It is about what Chelsea want and what they expect from me. You have to have a plan, a solid structure."

Gullit insists his future does not depend on Chelsea winning another trophy this season or reaching the quarter-finals of the European Cup-Winners Cup against Tromso at Stamford Bridge tonight.

His Italian striker Gianluca Vialli scored two late goals in a Norwegian storm to reduce Chelsea's deficit to 2-3.

"Brentford are a bad team but there is potential here," Adams said. "The basis of the squad is the same as last season when they reached the play-offs." Angry fans demanded Webb's resignation in a protest after last night's 1-0 home defeat to Carlisle.

The Football Association is to launch an investigation after the Chester City manager, Kevin Ratcliffe, was found guilty of racial discrimination at an industrial tribunal.

It ruled that the former Wales defender should have been disciplined by the club for verbally abusing an apprentice, James Huzzey, who becomes a free agent next summer.

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man, confirmed the FA wants to look into the case.

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FOOTBALL

Ince sets sights on place in European Cup

Despite defeat in the Uefa Cup on Tuesday, European ambitions still loom large at Anfield. Paul Walker reports.

Paul Ince has vowed to drive Liverpool back into Europe next season - in the Champions' League.

The Anfield captain underlined the feeling of anger and loss that followed the elimination from the Uefa Cup in the second round by Racing Strasbourg, a club only 14th in the French League. To be dumped by such a team has hurt the Reds, so used to nights of glorious success against far better teams than the one Strasbourg put out to protect their 3-0 lead from the first leg.

Ince was defiant, after Tuesday's 2-0 win for Liverpool saw his side go out 3-2 on aggregate. "It's disappointing to be out of Europe, it means so much to everyone at this club," he said. "We are absolutely gutted, mainly because we didn't feel we got the run of the ball when we needed it most in the second leg."

"Everyone is determined that we will be back in Europe next season, it is too important to this club. We must make sure we are in Europe again, with a good Premiership position that puts us in the Champions' League."

The Uefa Cup was a poor second prize for Liverpool at the end of last season, when for so long they had looked championship favourites. But their fade out at the end did not even

ensure they finished second, allowing Newcastle to sneak in and grab the European Cup Champions' League place allocated to the runners-up.

Now Ince, who had an outstanding game in midfield alongside the equally impressive Jamie Redknapp, believes Liverpool have to get their act together in the championship race. He said: "We must get our heads up, concentrate on our games with the next one against Spurs on Saturday."

Ince believes Liverpool proved themselves a better team than Strasbourg. He said: "We lost the tie out there with our display in the first leg. Last season, before I was at Liverpool, the club lost in identical fashion against Paris St-Germain.

"But I believe we didn't get the chances in that one, this time we created four or five more openings, and with a display like that proved we are a better team than them. We didn't get what we deserved, we didn't get the run of the ball when it mattered. But we gave it everything, the fans were fantastic and we didn't get the extra goals we deserved."

The Liverpool manager, Roy Evans, reckons that the shambolic defeat in France in the first leg could serve as a turning point in a topsy-turvy season that sees his under-achieving side labouring behind the front runners - particularly Manchester United.

Evans said: "If we can keep working as hard as we did in the Strasbourg game, I know we can go on to better things in the League. The players are dis-

appointed in the fact that we can be so inconsistent. But if they work as hard as that on a regular basis, you might not always play as well, but 99 times out of 100 you would get a result."

"I believe we can get there. Over the last three games since the first leg, we have done much better. We beat Derby, it didn't quite go how we would have liked at Bolton but we still got a point, and now this one, I can ask for no more effort."

Evans reckons the tide could well have turned. He added: "We have been on the up since Strasbourg, particularly in the commitment of the players in training sessions and games. They have taken that responsibility and it has improved us in many ways."

"But the earlier form has put us out of the competition. But at least we have gone out with a fight, with all guns blazing. With a touch of fortune we would still be in. We must take credit from that."

"We took all the stick and the flak from the Strasbourg game, quite rightly, it was fair criticism. But I think the boys deserve the praise this time for the way they went about their job. We lost the tie over there, to come back from 3-0 is very difficult."

"I can only praise the lads for having the belief to go out there and think they can achieve the result we wanted."

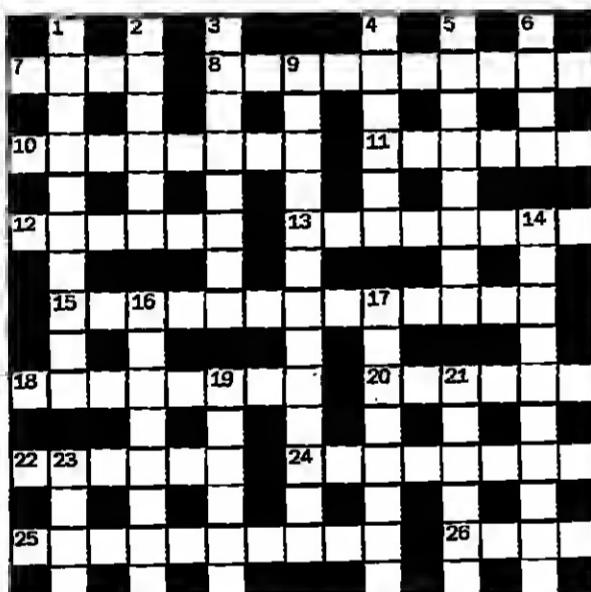
Liverpool now face successive home games against two Premiership strugglers, Tottenham and Barnsley, with a Coca-Cola Cup tie at home against Grimsby sandwiched between those two games.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3449 Thursday 6 November

By Mass

Wednesday's solution



ORCHESTRATION
PEACEFUL PLEASANT
ESTATE HELD
ROBUST DAREBOARD
SUGAR AEGEAN
MOST RUEFUL DENTURE
DOSAGE ENCLAVE
INTERLIA INSTAL
CUBAN
UFOLOGIST CHIPS
LUVN GAIMES
AGORA ANKIEBONE
RILLE EAU
POWERLESSNESS



- ACROSS
7 Discharge from river, reportedly ... (4)
8 ...possible cause of a vile beach (10)
10 Rook's imbued with heart of early bird (8)
11 Birds beginning to develop combs (6)
12 Excessive figures of speech (3-3)
13 Delight in erected house skirted by rolling Northern river (8)
15 An admiral's authority (13)
18 Key sequence for piano in version of 'Georgia' (8)

- 20 Girl's bitten into keen fruit (6)
22 Does it prevent leaks in laundrette? (6)
24 Garment in trendy yellow's better (8)
25 Pop letters in going back from house (10)
26 Irritate, ignoring the Parisian's call (4)
DOWN
1 Study fisherman's dial? (10)
2 Creature about to climb into pine (6)
3 Plant with dead stem I force up (8)
4 Sentence expressing ridicule (4,2)
5 Meal for Scot, one yielding iron (8)

6 Outlet's bolted, we hear (4)
9 It's an attribute of mine (4,9)
14 Meddled? Pried? Tel. No. should be changed (10)
16 Tom's likely to see through this kind of thing (4,4)
17 Hollow? Former warning has point at last (8)
19 Bug a North European (6)
21 Asetic, see, absent in spirit (6)
23 Briefly state word of grief (4)

Wigan will today confirm the reappointment of John Monie as the club's coach - a role he relinquished in 1994 after four hugely successful seasons.

The new Wigan chairman, Mike Nolan, admitted yesterday that Monie had agreed a two-year deal to assume control at Central Park once more.

It was news the board had hoped to suppress until the current Wigan coach, Eric Hughes, had been told the bad news. Hughes, who had been in charge for nine months, has been out of the country on holiday, but is now thought to be back. Attempts to contact him were, as of last night, unsuccessful, but the whole business will give him a dismal feeling of déjà vu.

The former Great Britain centre was sacked at St Helens less than two years ago to make way for one Australian, Shaun McRae, and is now being ditched - after a season that ended with Wigan winning the Premiership - for another.

But Monie is - even to those who resent the extent of Antipodean influence in the game here - no ordinary Australian and no ordinary coach.

His four seasons saw Wigan dominate all domestic competitions and set new standards in the game here. He has never been a believer in returning to the scene of former successes, but his experiences since have left him with something to prove.

His reign as the inaugural coach with the Auckland Warriors - for whom he left Wigan - was a disappointment and ended with him being sacked this season.

Since then, it has looked inevitable that he would return to Britain, where his reputation remains sky-high, but Leeds or projected franchises in Wales or Scotland were alternative destinations.

Despite rumours to that effect, Wigan will not appoint a high-profile co-coach, like Great Britain's Andy Goodway, to work alongside Monie. Simply bringing back the man most closely associated with their great days of the recent past is enough.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Wigan set to announce the reappointment of an uncommon coach

The most successful coach in British rugby league history will today return to the scene of his triumphs. Dave Hadfield awaits the second coming of John Monie.

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The heat is on.

Chelsea vs Tromso live from 7:30 tonight on **(5)**

10pm 6 Nov 1997